

T H E

TRIUMPHS OF TEMPER;

A

P O E M.

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[ Price 6 s. ]

THE HISTORY OF TAMPER;

M. E. C.



THE  
TRIUMPHS OF TEMPER;

A  
P O E M.

IN SIX CANTOS.

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BY WILLIAM HAYLEY, ESQ.

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O VOI CH' AVETE GL' INTELLETTI SANI  
MIRATE LA DOTTRINA, CHE SI ASCONDE  
SOTTO' IL VELAME DEGLI VERSI STRANI.

DANTE, Inferno, Canto 9.

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M.DCC.LXXXII

## E R R A T A.

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|-------------------|---|
| <b>CANTO I.</b>   | Ver. 7. <i>For victress read victor</i>               |
|                   | Ver. 55. <i>For gay read bright</i>                   |
|                   | Ver. 244. <i>For thick-cov'ring read thick-coming</i> |
| <b>CANTO II.</b>  | Ver. 168. <i>For grateful read graceful</i>           |
| <b>CANTO III.</b> | Ver. 428. <i>For arms read charms</i>                 |
|                   | Ver. 471. <i>For Pear read Peach</i>                  |
| <b>CANTO IV.</b>  | Ver. 268. <i>For mountain read mounting</i>           |
|                   | Ver. 342. <i>For fool read tool</i>                   |
|                   | Ver. 398. <i>For sightless read viewless</i>          |
| <b>CANTO V.</b>   | Ver. 411. <i>For infant read infinct</i>              |
| <b>CANTO VI.</b>  | Ver. 227. <i>For roves read mover</i>                 |
|                   | Ver. 430. <i>Change the comma to a full stop</i>      |

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## P R E F A C E.

**I**T seems to be a kind of duty incumbent on those who devote themselves to Poetry, to raise, if possible, the dignity of a declining Art, by making it as beneficial to Life and Manners as the limits of Composition, and the character of modern Times will allow : The ages, indeed, are past, in which the song of the Poet was idolized for its *miraculous effects* ; yet a Poem, intended to promote the cultivation of good-humour, may still, perhaps, be fortunate enough to prove of some little service to society in general ; or, if this idea may be thought too chimerical and romantic by sober Reason, it is at least one of those pleasing and innocent delusions, in which a poetical Enthusiast may be safely indulged.



The following production owes its existence to an incident in real life, very similar to the principal action of the last Canto ; but in forming the general plan of the work, it seemed to me absolutely necessary to introduce both the agency and the abode of SPLEEN, notwithstanding the difficulty and the hazard of attempting a subject so happily executed by the masterly pencil of Pope. I considered his Cave of Spleen as a most exquisite cabinet picture ; and, to avoid the servility of imitation, I determined to sketch the mansion of this gloomy Power on a much wider canvass : Happy, indeed, if the judgment of the Public may enable me to exclaim, with the honest vanity of the Painter, who compared his own works to the divine productions of Raphael,

“ E son Pittore anch’ Io !”

The celebrated Alessandro Tassoni, who is generally considered as the inventor of the modern



dern Heroi-comic Poety, was so proud of having extended the limits of his art by a new kind of composition, that he not only spoke of it with infinite exultation in one of his private letters, but even gave a MS. copy of his work to his native city of Modena, with an inscription, in which he styled it a new species of Poetry, invented by himself.

A few partial friends have asserted, that the present performance has some degree of similar merit ; but as I apprehend all the novelty it possesses, may rather require an apology, than entitle its Author to challenge commendation, I shall explain how far the conduct of the Poem differs from the most approved models in this mode of writing, and slightly mention the poetical effects, which such a variation appeared likely to produce.

It is well known, that the favourite Poems, which blend the serious and the comic, repre-

sent their principal characters in a satirical point of view : It was the intention of Tassoni (though prudence made him attempt to conceal it) to satirize a particular Italian Nobleman, who happened to be the object of his resentment. Boileau openly ridicules the French Ecclesiastics in his *Lutrin* ; Garth, our English Physicians, in his *Dispensary* ; and the Rape of the Lock itself, that most excellent and enchanting Poem, which I never contemplate but with new idolatry, is denominated *the best Satire extant*, by the learned Dr. Warton, in his very elegant and ingenious, but severe Essay on Pope : A sentence which seems to be confirmed by the Poet himself, in his letter to Mrs. Fermor, where he says, “ The character of Belinda, “ as it is now managed, resembles you in nothing “ but in beauty.” Though I think, that no composition can surpass, or perhaps ever equal this most happy effort of Genius, as a sportive Satire,

Satire, I imagined it might be possible to give a new Character to this mixed species of Poetry, and to render it by its Object, though not in its Execution, more noble than the most beautiful and refined Satire can be. We have seen it carried to inimitable perfection, in the most delicate raillery on Female Foibles :—It remained to be tried, if it might not also aspire to delineate the more engaging features of Female Excellence. The idea appeared to me worth the experiment ; for, if it succeeded, it seemed to promise a double advantage ; first, it would give an air of novelty to the Poem ; and, secondly, what I thought of much greater importance, it would render it more interesting to the heart. On these principles, I have endeavoured to paint SERENA as a most lovely, engaging, and accomplished character ; yet I hope the colouring is so faithfully copied from *general Nature*, that every man, who reads the Poem, may be  
happy



happy enough to know many Fair ones, who resemble my Heroine.

There is another point, in which I have also attempted to give this Poem an air of novelty : I mean, the manner of connecting the real and the visionary scenes, which compose it; by shifting these in alternate Cantos, I hoped to make familiar Incident and allegorical Picture afford a strong relief to each other, and keep the attention of the Reader alive, by an appearance particularly diversified. I wished, indeed (but I fear most ineffectually) for powers to unite some touches of the sportive wildness of Ariosto, and the more serious sublime painting of Dante, with some portion of the enchanting elegance, the refined imagination, and the moral graces of Pope ; and to do this, if possible, without violating those rules of propriety, which Mr. Cambridge has illustrated, by example as well as precept, in *The Scribleriad*, and in  
his



his sensible Preface to that elegant and learned Poem.

I have now very frankly informed my Reader of the *extent*, or rather of the *extravagance* of my desire ; for I will not give it the serious name of *design* : They, whom an enlightened taste has rendered thoroughly sensible how very difficult it must be to accomplish such an idea, will not only be the first to discern, but the most ready to pardon those errors, into which so hazardous an attempt may perhaps have betrayed me. I had thoughts of introducing this performance to the Public, by a Dissertation of considerable length on this species of Poetry ; but I forbear to indulge myself any farther in such preliminary remarks, as the anxiety of authors is so apt to produce, from the reflection, that, however ingeniously written, they add little or nothing to the success of a good Poem, and are

10

utterly

utterly insufficient to prevent that neglect, or oblivion, which is the inevitable fate of a bad one.

In dismissing a work to my Fair Readers, which is intended principally for their perusal, I shall only recommend it to their attention; and bid them farewell, in the words of the pleasant and courteous Tassoni—

“ Vaglia il buon voler, s’ altro non lice,

“ E chi la leggera, viva felice!

EARTHAM,

Jan. 31, 1781.

THE

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T H E  
T R I U M P H S  
O F  
T E M P E R.

---

C A N T O I.

**T**HE Mind's soft Guardian, who, tho' yet un Sung,  
Inspires with harmony the female tongue,  
And gives, improving every tender grace,  
The smile of angels to a mortal face;  
Her powers I sing; and scenes of mental strife, 5  
Which form the maiden for th' accomplish'd wife;  
Where the sweet victress sees, with sparkling eyes,  
Love her reward, and Happiness her prize.  
Daughters of Beauty, who the song inspire,  
To your enchanting notes attune my lyre! 10



And O ! if haply your soft hearts may gain  
 Or use, or pleasure from the motley strain,  
 Tho' formal critics, with a furly frown,  
 Deny your artless Bard the laurel crown,  
 He still shall triumph, if ye deign to spread  
 Your sweeter myrtle round his honour'd head.

15

In your bright circle young SERENA grew ;  
 A lovelier nymph the pencil never drew ;  
 For the fond Graces form'd her easy mien,  
 And Heaven's soft azure in her eye was seen.  
 She seem'd a rose-bud, when it first receives  
 The genial sun in its expanding leaves :

20

For now she enter'd those important years,  
 When the full bosom swells with hopes and fears ;  
 When conscious Nature prompts the secret sigh,  
 And sheds sweet languor o'er the melting eye ;  
 When nobler toys the female heart trepan,  
 And Dolls rejected, yield their place to Man.

25

Beneath a Father's care SERENA grew ;  
 The good Sir Gilbert, to his country true,

30

A faithful



A faithful Whig, who, zealous for the state,  
 In Freedom's service led the loud debate ;  
 Yet every day, by transmutation rare,  
 Turn'd to a Tory in his elbow chair,  
 And made his daughter pay, howe'er absurd, 35  
 Passive obedience to his sovereign word.

In his domestic sway he borrow'd aid  
 From prim PENELOPE, an ancient maid,  
 His upright sister, conscious of her worth,  
 Who valued still her beauty, and her birth ; 40  
 Tho' from her birth no envied rank she gain'd,  
 And of her beauty but the ghost remain'd ;  
 A restless ghost ! that with remembrance keen  
 Proclaim'd incessant what it once had been ;  
 Delighted still the steps of youth to haunt, 45  
 To watch the tender nymph, and warm gallant ;  
 And, with an eye that petrified pursuit,  
 Hang like the dragon o'er th' Hesperian fruit.

Tho' strictly guarded by this jealous power,  
 The mild SERENA no restraint could sour : 50

Pure was her bosom, as the silver lake,  
 Ere rising winds the ruffled water shake,  
 When the bright pageants of the morning sky  
 Across th' expansive mirror lightly fly,  
 By vernal gales in gay succession driven, 55  
 While the clear glass reflects the smile of heaven.  
 In gay content a sportive life she led,  
 The child of Modesty, by Virtue bred :  
 Her light companions Innocence and Ease :  
 Her hope was Pleasure, and her wish to please : 60  
 For this to Fashion early rites she paid :  
 For this to Venus secret vows she made ;  
 Nor held it sin to cast a private glance  
 O'er the dear pages of a new romance,  
 Eager in Fiction's touching scenes to find 65  
 A field, to exercise her youthful mind :  
 The touching scenes new energy imprest  
 On all the virtues of her feeling breast.  
 Sweet Evelina's fascinating power  
 Had first beguil'd of sleep her midnight hour : 70

Possess by Sympathy's enchanting sway,  
 She read, unconscious of the dawning day.  
 The Modern Anecdote was next convey'd  
 Beneath her pillow by her faithful maid.

The nymph, attentive as the brooding dove, 75  
 Pored o'er the tender scenes of Franzel's love :  
 The sinking taper now grew weak and pale ;  
 SERENA sigh'd, and dropt th' unfinish'd tale ;  
 But, as warm clouds in vernal æther roll,  
 The soft ideas floated in her soul : 80

Free from ambitious pride, and envious care,  
 To love, and to be lov'd, was all her prayer :  
 While these fond thoughts her gentle mind possess'd,  
 Soft slumber settled on her snowy breast.

Scarce had her radiant eyes began to close, 85  
 When to her view a friendly vision rose :  
 A fairy Phantom struck her mental sight,  
 Light as the gossamer, as æther bright ;  
 Array'd like Pallas was the pigmy form,  
 When the sage Goddess stills the martial storm. 90

Her



Her casque was amber, richly grac'd above  
 With down, collected from the callow dove :  
 Her burnish'd breast-plate, of a deeper dye,  
 Was once the armour of a golden fly :

A lynx's eye her little ægis shone, 95

By fairy spells converted into stone,  
 And worn of old, as elfin poets sing,  
 By Ægypt's lovely queen, a favourite ring :

Mysterious power was in the magic toy,  
 To turn the frowns of care to smiles of joy. 100

Her tiny lance, whose radiance stream'd afar,  
 Was one bright sparkle from the bridal star.

A filmy mantle round her figure play'd,  
 Fine as the texture, by Arachne laid  
 O'er some young plant, when glittering to the view 105

With many an orient pearl of morning dew.  
 The Phantom hover'd o'er the conscious Fair

With such a lively smile of tender care,  
 As on her elfin lord Titania cast,

When first she found his angry spell was past. 110

Round



Round her rich locks SERENA chanc'd to tie  
 An ample ribband of cærulean dye :  
 High o'er her forehead rose the graceful bow,  
 Whose arch commanded the sweet scene below :  
 The hovering Spirit view'd the tempting spot, 115  
 And lightly perch'd on this unbending knot ;  
 As the fair flutterer, of Pfyche's race,  
 Is seen to terminate her airy chace,  
 When, pleas'd at length her quivering wings to close,  
 Fondly she settles on the fragrant rose. 120

Now in soft notes, more musically clear  
 Than ever Fairy breath'd in mortal ear,  
 These words the visionary voice convey'd  
 To the charm'd spirit of the sleeping maid :

“ Thou darling of my care ! whose ripen'd worth 125  
 Shall spread my empire o'er the smiling earth ;  
 Whom Nature blest, forbidding modish Art  
 To cramp thy spirit, or contract thy heart ;  
 Screen'd from thy thought, nor in thy visions felt,  
 Long on thy opening mind I've fondly dwelt ; 130

In childhood's sorrows brought thee quick relief,  
 And dry'd thy April showers of infant grief ;  
 Taught thee to laugh at the malicious boy,  
 Who broke thy playthings with a barbarous joy,  
 To bear what ills the little Female haunt,  
 The testy Nurse, the imperious Governante,  
 And that tyrannic pest, the prying maiden Aunt.

135 }  
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Now ripening years a nobler scene supply ;

For life now opens on thy sparkling eye :

Thy rising bosom swells with just desire

140

Rapture to feel, and rapture to inspire :

Not the vain bliss, the transitory joys,

That childish Woman feels in radiant toys ;

The costly Diamond, or the lighter Pearl,

The massive Nabob, or the tinsel Earl.

145

Thy heart demands, each meaner aim above,

Th' imperishable wealth of sterling love ;

Thy wish, to please by ev'ry softer grace

Of elegance and ease, of form and face !

By

By lively fancy and by sense refin'd, 150

The stronger magic of the cultur'd mind !

Thy pure ambition, and thy virtuous plan,

To fix the variable heart of Man !

Short is the worship paid at Beauty's shrine ;

But lasting Love and Happiness are mine : 155

Mine, tho' the earth's mistaken, blinded race

Despise my influence, and my name debase ;

Nor breathe one vow to that ætherial friend,

On whom the colours of their life depend.

But to thy innocence I'll now display 160

The mystic marvels of my secret sway ;

And tell, in this thy fate-deciding hour,

My race, my name, my office, and my power.

First, hear what wonders human forms contain !

And learn the texture of the Female brain ! 165

By Nature's care in curious order spread,

This living net is fram'd of tender thread ;

Fine, as thy hand, some favour'd youth to grace,

Knits with nice art to form the mimic lace.



Within the center of this fretted dome, 170  
 Her secret tower, her heaven-constructed home,  
 Soft Sensibility, sweet Beauty's soul !  
 Keeps her coy state, and animates the whole,  
 Invisible as Harmony, who springs,  
 Wak'd by young Zephyr, from Æolian strings : 175  
 Her subtle power, more delicately fine,  
 Dwells in each thread, and lives in every line,  
 Whose quick vibrations, without end, impart  
 Pleasure and pain to the responsive heart.  
 As Zephyr's breath the willing chord inspires, 180  
 Whispering soft music to the trembling wires,  
 So with fond care I regulate, unseen,  
 The softer movements of this nice machine ;  
 TEMPER my earthly name, the nurse of Love !  
 But call'd SOPHROSYNE in realms above ! 185  
 When lovely Woman, perfect at her birth,  
 Blest with her early charms the wond'ring earth,  
 Her soul, in sweet simplicity array'd,  
 Nor shar'd my guidance, nor requir'd my aid.

Her



Her tender frame, nor confident nor coy, 190  
 Had every fibre tun'd to gentle joy :  
 No vain caprices swell'd her pouting lip ;  
 No gold produc'd a mercenary trip ;  
 Soft innocence inspir'd her willing kifs,  
 Her love was nature, and her life was blifs. 195  
 Guide of his reason, not his passion's prey,  
 She tamed the savage, Man, who blest'd her sway.  
 No jarring wishes fill'd the world with woes,  
 But youth was ecstasy, and age repose.

The Powers of Mischief met, in dark Divan, 200  
 To blast these mighty joys of envied Man :  
 The Fiends, at their infernal Leader's call,  
 Fram'd their base wiles in Demogorgon's hall.  
 In the deep center of that dreadful dome,  
 An hellish cauldron boil'd with fiery foam : 205  
 In this wide urn the circling spirits threw  
 Ingredients harsh, and hideous to the view ;  
 While the terrific master of the spell  
 With adjurations shook the depths of hell,

And in dark words, unmeet for mortal ear, 210

Bade the dire offspring of his art appear.

Forth from the vase, with fullen murmurs, broke

A towering mass of pestilential smoke :

Emerging from this fog of thickest night,

A Phantom swells, by slow degrees, to fight ; 215

But ere the view can seize the forming shape,

From the mock'd eye its lineaments escape :

It seem'd all passions melted into one,

Assum'd the face of all, and yet was none :

Hell stood aghast at its portentous mien, 220

And shuddering Demons call'd the spectre Spleen.

Hie thee to earth ! its mighty master cried,

O'er the vex'd globe in heavy vapours ride !

Within its center fix thy shadowy throne !

With shades thy subjects, and that hell thy own ! 225

Reign there unseen ! but let thy strong controul

Be hourly felt in Woman's wayward soul !

With darkest poisons from our deep abyfs,

Taint that pure fountain of terrestrial bliss !

Th'

Th' enormous Phantom, at this potent sound, 230  
 Roll'd forth obedient from the vast profound :  
 The quaking Fiends recover'd from their dread,  
 And Hell grew lighter, as the monster fled.  
 But now round earth the gliding vapours run,  
 Blot the rich æther, and eclipse the sun ; 235  
 All Nature sickens ; and her fairest flower,  
 Enchanting Woman, feels the baneful power :  
 As in her soul the clouds of Spleen arise,  
 The sprightly essence of her beauty flies :  
 In youth's gay prime, in hours with rapture warm, 240  
 Love looks astonish'd on her altering form :  
 To pleasing frolics, and enchanting wiles,  
 Life-darting looks, and soul-subduing smiles,  
 Dark whims succeed : thick-cov'ring fancies fret ;  
 The fullen passion, and the hasty pet ; 245  
 The swelling lip, the tear-distended eye,  
 The peevish question, the perverse reply ;  
 The moody humour, that, like rain and fire,  
 Blends cold disgust with unsubdu'd desire,

Flies



Flies what it loves, and, petulantly coy, 250  
 Feigns proud abhorrence of the proffer'd joy :  
 For Nature's artless aim, the wish to please  
 By genuine modesty, and simple ease,  
 Fashion's pert tricks the crowded brain oppress  
 With all the poor parade of tawdry drefs : 255  
 The sickly bosom pants for noise and shew,  
 For every bauble, and for every beau ;  
 The voice, that Health made harmony, disowns  
 That native charm for Languor's mimic tones ;  
 And feigns disease, till, feeling what it feigns, 260  
 Its fancied maladies are real pains.  
 Such, and a thousand still superior woes,  
 From Spleen's new empire o'er the earth arose :  
 Each simple dictate of the soul forgot,  
 Then first was form'd the mercenary plot ; 265  
 And Beauty practis'd that pernicious art,  
 The art of angling for an old man's heart ;  
 Tho' crawling to his bride with tottering knees,  
 His words were dotage, and his love disease.

From

From sex to sex this base contagion ran, 270  
 And Gold grew Beauty in the eyes of Man :  
 Courtship was traffic ; and the married life  
 But one loud jangle of incessant strife.

The gentle Sprite, who, on his radiant car,  
 Shines the mild regent of the evening-star, 275  
 And joys from thence those genial rays to shed,  
 That lead the bridegroom to the nuptial bed,  
 While earth's new ills his friendly soul absorb,  
 From Cynthia call'd me to his kindred orb ;  
 And, eager to redress the woes of Man, 280  
 The brilliant Son of Vesper thus began :  
 " Thou softest Being of the ætherial kind,  
 Be thy benignant cares no more confin'd  
 To smoothe the ruffled plume of Zephyr's wing,  
 To guard from cruel frost the infant spring, 285  
 To drive gross atoms from the rays of noon,  
 Or chase the halo from the vapourish moon !  
 Thy friendly nature will not now deny  
 To quit for nobler toils thy native sky ;

Thou see'st how Spleen's infernal vapours roll 290  
 Across the sweet serene of Woman's soul;  
 And earth, which darkens as her beauties fade,  
 Must grow a second hell without thy aid:  
 Take then thy station! fix thy nobler reign  
 O'er those fine chords, that form the Female brain, 295  
 That us'd, ere injur'd by the rust of Spleen,  
 To fill with harmony the human scene!  
 Go! lest her touch their tender tones destroy,  
 Teach them to vibrate to thy notes of joy!  
 Go! and restore, by stilling mental strife, 300  
 Health to faint Love, and happiness to Life!"  
 So spake that friend of Man, who lights above  
 His heavenly lamp of Hymenæal love:  
 In his just aim my kindred spirit join'd,  
 And flew obedient to the charge assign'd. 305  
 Hence, as the bias sways the unconscious bowl,  
 I long unseen have sway'd the careless soul;  
 Tho' oft I feel my power by Spleen subdu'd,  
 In the shrill Vixen, and the sullen Prude,



In some fair forms my soft dominion grows, 310  
 Like fragrance, rising from the opening rose :  
 Still I preserve, in many a lovely face,  
 That gay good-humour, and that constant grace,  
 Which heavenly Powers united to infold  
 In perfect Woman's new-created mould ; 315  
 When Nature, in her infant beauty blest,  
 The last and loveliest of her works carest.  
 But of those Nymphs, who, delicately fair,  
 Draw their soft graces from my forming care,  
 My young SERENA shines her peers above, 320  
 Pride of my hopes, and darling of my love.  
 Hence I to thee such mysteries unfold,  
 As Man's pedantic eye shall ne'er behold ;  
 Whose narrow science, tho' it proudly boast  
 To pierce the sky, and count the starry host, 325  
 Sees not the lucid band of airy Powers,  
 Who flutter round him in his secret hours :  
 But if to me, thy guardian now display'd,  
 Thy duteous orisons are justly paid,

Thou to those realms shalt pass with me thy guide, 330  
 Where Spleen's pale victims, after death, reside ;  
 Then to that orb, in vision shalt thou rise,  
 Unseen by mortal astronomic eyes,  
 Where I—but first let me thy soul prepare  
 To meet our secret foe's insidious snare ! 335  
 'Tis my fond purpose in thy form to shew  
 The sweetest model of my skill below :  
 A Youth I destine to thy dear embrace,  
 Crown'd with each mental charm, and manly grace,  
 With whom thy innocence, secure from strife, 340  
 Shall reap the beauteous joys of blameless life.  
 Pleas'd I observe thy little heart begin  
 To ask, what charms the mighty prize may win :  
 But know, tho' Elegance herself be seen  
 To guide thy motion, and to form thy mien ; 345  
 Tho' Beauty o'er thy filial cheek diffuse  
 The soft enchantment of her roseate hues,  
 Not from their favour shall this glory rise !  
 TEMPER shall singly gain the splendid prize :

The sudden conquest shall be mine alone, 350  
 And Love with transport shall my triumph own.  
 Such are my hopes ; but I with pain relate  
 What hard conditions are annex'd by Fate :  
 As chemic fires, that patient labour blows,  
 Draw the rich perfume from the Persian rose, 355  
 So must thou form, by fiery toils refin'd,  
 The living essence of thy sweeter mind.  
 Dimly I see, on Destiny's dull glass,  
 Three dangerous trials 'tis thy doom to pass ;  
 And oh ! if once forgetful of my power, 360  
 Good-humour fail thee in the fateful hour,  
 Farewell those joys, that wait the happy wife !  
 Farewell the vision of unclouded life !  
 Fain would my love thy secret perils shew,  
 Which Fate allows not even me to know : 365  
 In Spleen's dark court a thousand agents dwell,  
 Who bind her victims in the wayward spell ;  
 Perchance three prime supporters of her sway,  
 The busiest of her Fiends, may cross thy way :



Stern Contradiction, her ill-favour'd child, 370  
 Of fierce demeanor, and of spirit wild,  
 Bane of delight ! and horror of the sex !  
 His plan to puzzle, and his pride to vex !—  
 Or Scandal, filthy hag ! who blindly limps  
 Round the wide earth, supported by her Imps, 375  
 Her inky Demons, who delight to print  
 Her base suggestion, and her envious hint :—  
 Or groundless Jealousy, pert changeling ! born  
 Of amorous Vanity, and angry Scorn,  
 Whose bitter taunts with public insult dare 380  
 Basely to wound the unoffending Fair,  
 Proud the sweet joys of Innocence to crush,  
 And spread o'er Beauty's cheek the burning blush.  
 Whether these kindred Fiends, or one or all,  
 Shall aim thy airy spirit to enthrall, 385  
 Are points, my fondness tries in vain to reach;  
 But trust my caution ! and beware of each !

Left to thy lively mind my words may seem  
 The vain chimera of a common dream,

By one unquestionable sign be taught 390  
 To prize my presence in thy waking thought !  
 An azure ribband, on thy toilet thrown,  
 Shall make the magic of my empire known :  
 On this thy sportive needle tried its powers,  
 And silver spangles form'd the mimic flowers ; 395  
 On these my love shall breathe a secret charm ;  
 With this, my Cæstus, thy soft bosom arm !  
 Above it let the decent tucker rise,  
 To hide the mystic band from mortal eyes !  
 When Spleen's dark Powers would teach that breast to swell,  
 This guardian cincture shall those Powers repel : 401  
 As the touch'd talisman, more swift than thought,  
 To save her charge, th' Arabian Fairy brought ;  
 So shall this zone, if justly I'm obey'd,  
 Bring my soft spirit to thy certain aid. 405  
 In Love's great name observe this high behest !  
 Revere my power !—Be gentle, and be blest !”

Here the kind Sprite her friendly counsel clos'd,  
 And lightly vanish'd—Still SERENA doz'd ;

Still

Still in sweet trance she fondly seem'd to hear 410

The soft persuasion vibrate in her ear.

But waking now far different notes she found ;

Less pleasing echos in her chamber found :

For now the heralds of the London day

Sing their loud mattins in th' uncrowded way ; 415

Th' impatient Milk-maid now, with early din,

Screams to the rattle of her pail of tin ;

With Sweep's faint cry, and, latest of the crew,

The deep-ton'd music of the murmuring Jew.

END OF THE FIRST CANTO.

CANTO



## C A N T O II.

**Y**E radiant Nymphs ! whose opening eyes convey  
 Warmth to the world, and lustre to the day !  
 Think what o'ershadowing clouds may cross your brain,  
 Before those lovely lids shall close again !  
 What funds of Patience twelve long hours may ask,      5  
 When cold Discretion claims her daily task !  
 Ah think betimes ! and, while your morning care  
 Sheds foreign odors o'er your fragrant hair,  
 Tinge your soft spirit with that mental sweet,  
 Which may not be exhal'd by Passion's heat ;      10  
 But charm the sense, with undecaying power,  
 Thro' every chance of each diurnal hour !  
 O ! might you all perceive your toilets crown'd  
 With such cosmetics as SERENA found !  
 For, to the warning vision fondly true,      15  
 Now the quick Fair one to the toilet flew :

With keen delight her ravish'd eye survey'd  
 The mystic ribband on her mirror laid :  
 Bright shone the azure, as Aurora's car,  
 And every spangle seem'd a living star. 20  
 With sportive grace the smiling damsel prest  
 The guardian cincture to her snowy breast,  
 More lovely far than Juno, when she strove  
 To look most lovely in the eyes of Jove ;  
 And willing Venus lent her every power, 25  
 That sheds enchantment o'er the amorous hour :  
 For spells more potent on this band were thrown,  
 Than Venus boasted in her beauteous zone.  
 Her dazzling Cæstus could alone inspire  
 The sudden impulse of short-liv'd desire : 30  
 These finer threads with lasting charms are fraught,  
 Here lies the tender, but unchanging thought,  
 Silence, that wins, where eloquence is vain,  
 And Tones, that harmonize the mad'ning brain,  
 Soft Sighs, that Anger cannot hear, and live, 35  
 And Smiles, that tell, how truly they forgive ;

And.

And lively Grace, whose gay diffusive light  
 Puts the black phantoms of the brain to flight,  
 Whose cheering powers thro' every period last,  
 And make the present happy as the past. 40

Such secret charms this richer Zone possess,  
 Whose flowers, now sparkling on SERENA'S breast,  
 Give, tho' unseen, those swelling orbs they bind,  
 Smiles to her face, and beauty to her mind :  
 For now, observant of the Sprite's behest, 45

The Nymph conceals them by her upper vest :  
 Safe lies the spell, no mortal may descry,  
 Not keen PENELOPE'S all-piercing eye ;  
 Who constant, as the steps of morn advance,  
 Surveys the household with a searching glance, 50  
 And entering now, with all her usual care,  
 Reviews the chamber of the youthful Fair.

Beneath the pillow, not compleatly hid,  
 The Novel lay—She saw—she seiz'd—she chid :  
 With rage and glee her glaring eye-balls flash, 55  
 Ah wicked age ! she cries, ah filthy trash !



From the first page my just abhorrence springs;  
 For modern anecdotes are monstrous things :  
 Yet will I see what dangerous poisons lurk,  
 To taint thy youth, in this licentious work. 60  
 She said : and rudely from the chamber rush'd,  
 Her pallid cheek with expectation flush'd,  
 With ardent hope her eager spirit shook,  
 Vain hope ! to banquet on a luscious book.  
 So if a Priest, of the Arabian sect, 65  
 In Turkish hands forbidden wine detect,  
 The sacred Mussulman, with pious din,  
 Arraigns the culprit, and proclaims the sin,  
 Curses with holy zeal th' inflaming juice,  
 But cursing takes it for his secret use. 70

The gay SERENA, with unruffled mind,  
 The pleasing Novel, thus unread, resign'd.  
 The Vision on her soul such virtue left,  
 She only smil'd at the provoking theft ;  
 The teasing incident she deem'd a jest, 75  
 Nor felt the Zone grow tighter on her breast.

Now in full charms descends the finish'd Fair,  
 For now the morning banquet claims her care ;  
 Already at the board, with viands pil'd,  
 Her Sire impatient sits, and chides his tardy child. 80  
 On his imperial lips rude Hunger reigns,  
 And keener Politics usurp his brains:  
 But when her love-inspiring voice he hears,  
 When the soft magic of her smile appears,  
 In that glad moment he at once forgets 85  
 His empty stomach, and the nation's debts :  
 He bends to Nature's more divine controul,  
 And only feels the Father in his soul.  
 Quick to his hand behold her now present  
 The Indian liquor of celestial scent ! 90  
 Not with more grace the nectar'd cup is given  
 By rose-lip'd Hebe to the Lord of Heaven.  
 While her fair hands a fresh libation pour,  
 Fashion's loud thunder shakes the sounding door.  
 The light SERENA to the window springs, 95  
 On Curiosity's amusive wings :

Her quick eyes sparkle with surprise, to see  
 The glories of a golden vis-à-vis :  
 Its glittering tablet gleam'd with mimic pearl,  
 And the rich coronet announc'd an Earl.

100

The good old Knight grew somewhat proud to hear  
 Of this new visit from the early Peer :

SERENA recollects the Vision's truth,  
 And fluttering, hopes it is the promis'd Youth :

PENELOPE from her high chamber peeps ;

105

There her unfinish'd charms she coyly keeps ;  
 With sage reserve her modesty abhorr'd.  
 To shew her morning face before a Lord.

The Peer alights : the well-rang'd vassals bawl  
 His founding title thro' the spacious hall,  
 Till in the deep saloon's extremest bound  
 Th' ear-tickling words, " LORD FILLIGREE," resound !

110

As when great Héctor, setting war apart,  
 Advanc'd to parley, with his spear athwart,  
 The Greeks beheld him with a still delight ;  
 And silent reverence stopt the rising fight ;

115

With



With such respect, but unchastis'd by fear,  
 Sir GILBERT and the Nymph first meet the Peer ;  
 And, while his morning compliments commence,  
 The flighted breakfast stands in cold suspense. 120

But far unlike to Hector's ruder grace  
 His modern stature, and his modish face !  
 Nor less he differs from those Barons old,  
 Whose arms are blazon'd on his car of gold ;  
 Whose prostrate castle guarded once the lands, 125  
 Where, spruce in motley pride, his villa stands,  
 By Taste erected, in her trimmest mode,  
 Her mushroom structure, and her quaint abode.

As the neat Daisy to the Sun's broad flower,  
 As the French Boudoir to the Gothic Tower, 130  
 Such is the Peer, whom Fashion much admires,  
 Compar'd in person to his ancient fires :  
 For their broad shoulder, and their brawny calf,  
 Their coarse, loud language, and their coarser laugh,  
 His finer form, more elegantly slim, 135  
 Displays the fashionable length of limb :

With

With foreign shrugs his country he regards,  
 And her lean tongue with foreign words he lards ;  
 While Gallic Graces, who correct his style,  
 Forbid his mirth to pass beyond a smile. 140

As the nice workman in the wooden trade,  
 Hides his coarse ground with finest woods o'erlaid,  
 Thus our young Lord, with Fashion's phrase refin'd,  
 Finer'd the mean interior of his mind :

And hence, in Courtesy's soft lustre seen, 145  
 His spirit shone, as graceful as his mien.

The artless Fair, on Fashion's kind report,  
 Thought him the mirror of a matchless Court :  
 Much she his dress, his language much observes,  
 Whose finer accents prove his feeling nerves. 150

Her fancy now the destin'd Lover spies,  
 But her free heart abjures the quick surmise ;  
 Yet as he spoke, at every flattering word  
 The Vision's promise to her thought recurr'd.

Far more parental pride contrives to blind 155

The good Sir GILBERT's more-experienc'd mind,

Who

Who fondly faw, and at the prospect fmil'd,  
 A future Countefs in his favourite child.  
 But what new flutterings fhook SERENA's breast,  
 What hopes and fears the modeft Nymph opprest, 160  
 When with a fimpering fmile, and foft regard,  
 The Peer difplay'd a mirth-expreffive card,  
 Where the gay Graces, in a fportive band,  
 Shew the fweet art of Cipriani's hand ;  
 Where, ~~in~~ their train, his airy Cupids throng, 165  
 And laughing drag a comic mask along !  
 " We," cries my Lord, with felf-fufficient joy,  
 Twirling, with lordly airs, the grateful toy,  
 " We, who poffefs true fcience, we, who give  
 The world a leffon in the art to live, 170  
 We for the Fair a fplendid Fête defign,  
 And pay our homage thus at Beauty's fhrine."  
 He fpoke ; and fpeaking, to the blufhing Maid,  
 With modifh eafe, th' inviting card convey'd,  
 Where Mirth announc'd her mafque devoted hour 175  
 In characters intwin'd with many a flower :

The



The blushing Maid, with eyes of quick desire,  
 View'd it, and felt her little soul on fire ;  
 For of all scenes she had not yet survey'd,  
 Her heart most panted for a Masquerade : 180  
 But her gay hopes increasing terrors drown,  
 And dread forebodings of her Father's frown.  
 In mute suspense to read his thought she tries,  
 And strongly pleads with her prevailing eyes,  
 Her eyes, for doubt enchain'd her modest tongue, 185  
 While on his sovereign word her pleasure hung.  
 With such a tender, and persuasive air  
 Of soft endearment, and of anxious care,  
 Thetis attended from th' almighty Sire  
 His fateful answer to her fond desire : 190  
 The good old Knight, like the Olympian God,  
 Blest the fair Suppliant with his gracious nod ;  
 Her lively spirit the kind signal took,  
 And her glad heart, in every fibre, shook.  
 The party settled, it imports not how, 195  
 The Peer politely made his parting bow :

The Nymph, with eyes that sparkled joyous fire,  
 Kifs'd the round cheek of her complying Sire,  
 Then swiftly flew, and summon'd to her aid  
 Th' important counsel of her favourite maid, 200  
 To vent her joy, and, as the moments press,  
 To fix that first of points, a Fancy-dress.

Quick as the Poet's eyes o'er Nature fly,  
 Piercing the deep, or traversing the sky,  
 With such light speed her fond ideas glance 205  
 O'er play and poem, story and romance,  
 While all the Characters, she e'er has read,  
 Flash on her brain, and fill her busy head.

Now in Diana's form she hopes to meet  
 A fond Endymion fighting at her feet ; 210  
 Now her proud thought terrestrial pomp assumes,  
 And Dian's crescent yields to Indian plumes ;  
 Now, in the habit of the Grecian Isles,  
 She hears some Osman suing for her smiles,

F

And

And sees his soul that blaze of drefs outfhine, 215  
 Whose wealth impoverish'd a diamond-mine ;  
 Now simpler charms her quick attention draw,  
 The rofe-crown'd bonnet, and the hat of ftrow,  
 A Village-maid ſhe ſeems, in neat attire,  
 A faithful Shepherd now her ſole deſire. 220  
 Thus, as new figures in her fancy throng,  
 “ She’s every thing by ſtarts, and nothing long ;”  
 But, in the ſpace of one revolving hour,  
 Flies thro’ all ſtates of Poverty and Power,  
 All forms, on whom her veering mind can pitch, 225  
 Sultana, Gipſy, Goddeſs, Nymph, and Witch.  
 At length, her ſoul with Shakeſpear’s magic fraught,  
 The wand of Ariel fixt her roving thought ;  
 Ariel’s light graces all her heart poſſeſs,  
 And Jenny’s order’d to prepare the drefs. 230  
 It ſeems already bought, with fond applauſe ;  
 An azure tiſſue, and a ſilver gauze ;



Too soon, alas! that garb of heavenly hue

The ready Mercer flashes to her view.

\* Ah blind to Fate! how oft the youthful belle 235

Feels her gay heart at sight of tiffue swell!

And thinks the fashionable filk must prove

Her robe of triumph, and a spell to Love!

To thee, sweet Maid, whose pleasure-darting eyes

Joy in this favourite vest, an hour shall rise, 240

When thou shalt hate the filk so fondly fought,

And with thy silver-spotted gauze unbought:

For busy Spleen thy trial now prepares;

Darkly she forms her unsuspected snares,

And, keen to raise her pleasure-killing storm, 245

Assumes PENELOPE's congenial form.

In that prim shape, which all the Graces shun,

See the four Fiend to good Sir GILBERT run!

\* Nescia mens hominum fati fortisque futuræ;

Et servare modum, rebus sublata secundis.

Turno tempus erit, magno cum optaverit emptum

Intactum Pallanta, et cum spolia ista diemque

Oderit.

ÆNEID. X. V. 501. & seq.

Where, deeply pondering the Public Debt,  
 Silent he muses o'er a new Gazette ! 250  
 Ent'ring, she view'd, with eyes of envious spite,  
 The card, that spoke the masque-devoted night :  
 Eager she darted on the graceful toy,  
 And, fiercely pointing to each naked boy,  
 " Canst thou," she cried, in a discordant scream, 255  
 That rous'd the Politician from his dream,  
 While with her voice the echoing chamber rings,  
 " \* Say! canst thou suffer these flagitious things ?  
 " Are these devices to thy daughter brought,  
 " That wake such gross impurity of thought ? 260  
 " In vain are all the prudent words I preach,  
 " The modest maxims that I strive to teach,  
 " By foolish fondness of your sense beguil'd,  
 " You still indulge, and spoil the flippant child :  
 " For me, whate'er I say is deem'd absurd ; 265  
 " She scorns my sage advice :—but mark my word,

\* Ζην πάτερ, ἢ νουθεσίῃ, οἷόν τι κατ' ἐρα ἐργα, &c.

ILIAD 5. v. 872. & seq.

“ If to this ball you let the Hoyden run,

“ Your power is ended, and the Girl undone.”

The patriot Knight, by interruption vext,  
In his political pursuits perplex, 270  
While he with wrath th’ intruding Mischief eyed,  
Stern to the false PENELOPE replied :

“ Go ! teasing Prude, cease in my ears to vent

“ Thy envious pride, and peevish discontent !

“ To me of prudence canst thou vainly boast ? 275

“ Of all my household, thou hast plagu’d me most :

“ The joys thou blamest are thy dear delight,

“ By day the Visit, and the Ball by night :

“ And, tho’ too old a Lover to trepan,

“ Thy midnight dream, thy morning thought, is Man.

“ Wert thou less closely to my blood allied, 281

“ Thou should’st, to cure thee of thy canting pride,

“ Be sent to sigh alone o’er purling brooks,

“ Scold village maids, and croak to croaking rooks.”

He spoke indignant : the sly Fiend withdrew, 285  
Nor inly griev’d ; for well her force she knew.



As Indian females, in a jealous hour,  
 Of secret poison try the subtlest power,  
 Which sure, tho' slow, corrodes th' unconscious prey,  
 And ends its triumph on a distant day: 290

Thus the departing Fury left behind  
 Her venom, latent in Sir GILBERT's mind.  
 The hidden mischief tho' no eye observes,  
 He feels it fretting on his alter'd nerves ;  
 But the kind habit of his healthy soul 295

Still struggled hard against its base controul.  
 Now Spleen's dark vapours, in his bosom hid,  
 Prompt him the promis'd pleasure to forbid ;  
 Now Love's soft pleadings that dire thought destroy,  
 And save the blossom of his daughter's joy ; 300  
 Her envious Aunt now serves him for a jest,  
 And gay good-humour reassumes his breast.

While Spleen's dark power now sinks, and now revives,  
 At length the day, th' important day, arrives,  
 Which in his breast must end the close debate, 305  
 And fix the colour of SERENA's fate.

Now

Now comes the hour, when the convivial Knight  
 Waits to begin the dinner's chearful rite :  
 His fond heart ever, with a Father's pride,  
 Joys to behold his darling at his side ; 310  
 But most the absence of her smile he feels  
 In the gay season of his social meals :  
 Hence, while for her the rich repast attends,  
 His hasty summons to the Nymph he sends :  
 The happy Nymph superior cares induce 315  
 To risk his anger by a rash excuse :  
 She craves his pardon ; but, for time distressed,  
 She still is busy on her magic vest ;  
 To range her diamonds in a sparkling zone,  
 She begs to snatch her scanty meal alone. 320  
 The Knight in fullen state begins to dine :  
 Spleen, like a Harpy, flutters o'er his wine :  
 Invisible she poisons every dish,  
 Tinging with gall his mutton, fowl, and fish.  
 The more he eats, the more perverse he grows ; 325  
 For as his hunger sunk, his choler rose.

The

The cloth remov'd, he cries, with vapours sick,  
 The Pears are mellow, and the Port is thick ;  
 Tho' nicer fruit Pomona never knew,  
 And his rich wine surpass'd the ruby's hue ! 330

A thousand times his dizzy brain revolves  
 A stern command : now doubts, and now resolves  
 To bid the Nymph descend, and, disarray'd,  
 Quit her dear project of the Masquerade :  
 As oft kind Nature to his heart recurr'd, 335  
 And Love parental stopt the cruel word.

Mean time, unconscious of the brooding storm,  
 The Nymph exults in her improving form :  
 Gay is her smile, as those the Queen of Love  
 Darts on the Graces in her court above, 340  
 While they contrive, with love-inspiring cares,  
 New modes of beauty for the robe she wears.  
 At length, each duty of the toilet past,  
 The glance of triumph on the mirror cast,  
 Now the light wand our finish'd Ariel arms ; 345  
 Glad Jenny glories in her Lady's charms ;

And



And gives full utterance, as she smooths her vest,  
To the sweet bodings of SERENA's breast.

O! lovely bias of the Female soul!

Which trembling points to Pleasure's distant pole; 350  
Which with fond trust on flattering Hope relies,  
O'erleaps each peril, that in prospect lies,  
And, springing to the goal, anticipates the prize!  
Such was SERENA's fear-discarding state;  
Her eye beheld not the dark frowns of Fate: 355  
She only saw, the combat all forgot,  
The triumph promis'd as her glorious lot.

Now, eager to display her light attire,  
The sprightly Damsel seeks her fullen Sire;  
His gloomy brow with sportive air she kist: 360  
Ah! how could Spleen that magic lip resist?  
That voice, whose melting music might assuage  
The scorpion Anger's self-tormenting rage?  
For ne'er did Nature to a Sire's embrace  
Present a filial form of softer grace; 365

G Or

Or Fancy view a shape of lovelier kind  
In the bright mirror of her Shakespear's mind.

The sulky Fiend, in spite of all her art,  
Had now been banish'd from the Father's heart,  
But that, resolv'd her utmost force to try, 370

She summon'd to her aid her old ally,  
The fiery Demon, temper-troubling Gout,  
Who sinks the lively, and appalls the stout ;  
Who now, assisting Spleen's malignant aim,  
Shoots in quick throbbings through Sir GILBERT's frame.  
Thus sorely pester'd by a double foe, 376

Galling his giddy brain, and burning toe,  
The testy Knight, with stern and fullen air,  
Denounc'd his humour to the shudd'ring Fair :

" Go change your dress ! give up this vain delight ! 380

" I will not hear of Masquerades to-night :

" Your Chaperone's inform'd, she need not wait,

" So change your dress ! and sit with me sedate."

As the proud dame, whose avaricious glee  
Built golden castles in the rich South Sea, 385

Gaz'd

Gaz'd on her Broker, when he told her first  
 Her wealth was vanish'd, and the bubble burst :  
 So gaz'd the Nymph, hearing her Sire destroy  
 Her airy palace of ideal joy.  
 First her fond thoughts to flattering doubt incline, 390  
 And deem the harsh command no fix'd design,  
 But the quick fall of a peevish word,  
 That Love revokes, the moment it is heard :  
 Or haply mirth, in mimic wrath express'd,  
 A feign'd forbiddance utter'd but in jest : 395  
 To this short hope her sinking spirit clung,  
 To see his softening eyes refute his tongue.  
 Ah fruitless hope ! for there she cannot find  
 The well-known signals of the friendly mind.  
 Stern Contradiction, with the frown of Fate, 400  
 On his dark visage reign'd in fullen state ;  
 Felt in each feature, in each accent shewn,  
 Lower'd in his look, and thunder'd in his tone.  
 Hence the warm bosom of the lively Fair  
 Now shivers with the chill of blank despair : 405



Now Disappointment's thick'ning shadows roll

A cloud of horror o'er the darken'd soul ;

And Fancy, in a sick delirium tost,

Gives double value to each pleasure lost.

The blasted joys, she labours to forget,

410

Rush on her mind, and waken keen regret :

Her cheek turns pale—the tear prepares to start,

And palpitation heaves her swelling heart.

But here, SOPHROSYNE ! thy guardian aid

Saves from her potent foe the sinking Maid.

415

Her bosom, into strong emotions thrown,

Now feels the pressure of thy friendly Zone.

Swift thy kind cautions to her soul recur,

More quick to cancel faults, than prone to err.

As the rough swell of the insurgent tides

420

By the mild impulse of the Moon subsides :

So, by her mystic Monitor repress,

The flood of passion leaves her lighten'd breast,

From her clear brain each cloudy vapour flies,

And Joy's bright ray rekindles in her eyes.

425

Reviving

Reviving Gaiety full lustre spread  
 O'er all her features, and with smiles she said :  
 " Let others drive to Pleasure's distant dome !  
 " Be mine the dearer joy to please at home !"  
 Scarce had she spoke, when she with sportive ease 430  
 Prest her Piano-forte's fav'rite keys,  
 O'er softest notes her rapid fingers ran,  
 Sweet prelude to the Air she thus began !

SOPHROSYNE ! thou Guard unseen !  
 Whose delicate controul 435  
 Can turn the discord of Chagrin  
 To Harmony of Soul ! -  
 Above the lyre, the lute above,  
 Be mine thy melting tone,  
 Which makes the peace of all we love 440  
 The basis of our own !

So

So sung the Nymph, not uninspir'd : the Sprite  
 Invok'd so fondly in the mystic rite,  
 With richest music swell'd her warbling throat,  
 And gave new sweetness to her sweetest note. 445  
 As when the seraph Uriel first begun  
 His carol to the new-created Sun,  
 The sacred echo shook the vast profound,  
 And Chaos perish'd at the potent sound :  
 So, at the magic of SERENA's strain, 450  
 Spleen vanish'd from her Sire's chaotic brain ;  
 Whose fibres, lighten'd of that load, rejoice  
 In the dear accents of her dulcet voice.  
 Much he inclines his mandate to recall,  
 And send the Fair one to the promis'd Ball ; 455  
 But stubborn Pride forbids him to revoke  
 The solemn sentence, which Ill-humour spoke.  
 Still, conscious of her power, the Nymph prolongs  
 The soft enchantment of her soothing songs ;



Which his fond mind in firm attention keep, 460

To his fixt hour of supper and of sleep :

This now arriv'd, the Knight retiring, shed

A double blessing on his darling's head ;

And with unusual exultation prest

His lovely Child to his parental breast. 465

Thus while to rest the happy Sire withdrew,

The Nymph, more happy, to her chamber flew ;

And, Jenny now dismiss'd, the grateful Fair

Breathes to her guardian Sprite this tender prayer :

" Thou kind Preserver ! whose attentive zeal 470

" Gives me in this contented hour to feel

" That dearest pleasure of a soul refin'd,

" The triumph of the self-corrected mind ;

" If happy in the strength thy smiles impart,

" I own thy favour in no thankless heart, 475

" Still let me view thy form, so justly dear !

" Still in kind Visions to these eyes appear !

" Thy friendly dictates teach me to fulfil !

" And let thy aid avert each future ill !"

While

While fond Devotion taught her thus to speak, 480  
The soft Down sinks beneath her lovely cheek,  
And settling on her lips, that sweetly close,  
Silence, enamour'd, lulls her to repose.

END OF THE SECOND CANTO.

CANTO

10

Or,



Or, tickled by the feather of the dove, >  
 The softer Virgin dreams of endless Love.  
 There was a time, when Fortune's bright decrees 15  
 Were seen to realize such dreams as these :  
 Now dangerous visions the fond mind decoy  
 Vainly to hope for unexisting joy,  
 While Belles and Bards with mournful sighs exclaim,  
 Mortality has seiz'd both Love and Fame. 20

Ah fair SERENA, might the boast be ours  
 To clear from such a charge these heavenly Powers !  
 Blest ! might thy Bard deserve in Fame to see  
 A guard as faithful, as Love proves to thee !  
 Blest ! if that airy Being gild his life, 25  
 Who sav'd thee trembling on the brink of strife,  
 And now, kind prompter of thy nightly dream,  
 Fill'd thy rapt spirit with her sacred beam !  
 For soon as Slumber fet thy soul at large,  
 Thy Guardian Power revisited her charge ; 30  
 And, lightly hovering o'er th' illumin'd bed,  
 Thus with fond smiles of approbation said :

“ Well

" Well hast thou past, sweet Maid, one trying scene,  
 " One fiery ordeal of the tyrant Spleen :  
 " Thus, my SERENA, may thy force sustain 35  
 " Each harder trial, that may yet remain !  
 " Against the Fiend to fortify thy soul,  
 " By useful knowledge of her dark controul,  
 " I come to shew thee, what no mortal eye,  
 " Save thine, was e'er permitted to descry ; 40  
 " The realms, where Spleen's infernal agents goad  
 " The ghostly tenants of her drear abode.  
 " Now summon all thy strength ! throw fear aside,  
 " And firmly trust in thy ætherial Guide !"

She spoke : and thro' the Night's furrounding shade 45  
 The obedient Nymph, not unappall'd, convey'd ;  
 Thro' long, long tracts of darkness, on they past  
 With speed, that struck the trembling Maid aghast,  
 Till now, recovering by degrees, she found  
 Her soft foot press upon the solid ground. 50  
 Encourag'd by her Guide, at length she tries  
 To search the gloomy scene, with anxious eyes.

\* “ Thro’ me ye pass to Spleen’s terrific dome :  
 Thro’ me, to Discontent’s eternal home :  
 Thro’ me, to those, who sadden’d human life, 55  
 By sullen humour, or vexatious strife ;  
 And here, thro’ scenes of endless vapours hurl’d,  
 Are punish’d in the forms, they plagued the world ;  
 Justly they feel no joy, who none bestow,  
 All ye who enter, every hope forego !” 60  
 O’er an arch’d cavern, rough with horrid stone,  
 On which a feeble light, by flashes, shone,  
 These characters, that chill’d her soul with dread,  
 SERENA, fixt in silent wonder, read.  
 As she began to speak, her voice was drown’d 65  
 By the shrill echo of far other sound :

\* Per me si va nella citta dolente,  
 Per me si va nell’ eterno dolore,  
 Per me si va tra la perduta gente,  
 \* \* \* \* \*  
 Lasciate ogni speranza, voi ch’ intrate.  
 Queste parole di colore oscuro  
 Vid’ io scritte al sommo d’una porta.

DANTE, Inferno. 3.

Forth



Forth from the portal lamentable cries  
 Of wailing Infants, without number, rise.  
 Compassion to this poor and piteous flock  
 Led the soft Maid still nearer to the rock. 70  
 The pining band within she now espied,  
 And, touch'd with tender indignation, cried,  
 " How could these little forms, of life so brief,  
 " Deserve this dire abode of lasting grief ?"  
 " —Well may thy gentle heart be sore concern'd 75  
 " At sight so moving," the mild Sprite return'd :  
 " Thou seest in those, whose wailings wound thy ears,  
 " The puny progeny of modern Peers:  
 " Their Sires, by Avarice or Ambition led,  
 " Aliens to Love, approach'd the nuptial bed; 80  
 " With proud indifference, and with cold distaste,  
 " Their homely brides reluctantly embrac'd,  
 " And by such union gave disastrous birth  
 " To these poor pale incumbrances of earth,  
 " Who, bred in Vanity, with Pride their dower, 85  
 " Were Spleen's sure victims from their natal hour,  
 " And

“ And in their splendid cradles pul’d and pin’d,  
 “ Till Fate their ill-spun thread of life untwin’d,  
 “ And to this vestibule convey’d their ghosts,  
 “ To form the van-guard of th’ infernal hosts. 90  
 “ But let not Pity’s ineffectual charm  
 “ Impede thy progress, or thy strength disarm !  
 “ Follow and fear not ! guarded by my care,  
 “ From all the phantoms, that around thee glare.”

She spoke ; and enter’d, ere the Nymph replied, 95  
 A pass, that open’d in the cavern’s side,  
 Low, dark, and rocky—with her body bent,  
 SERENA follow’d down the dire descent.  
 A sudden light soon struck her dazzled view ;  
 But ’twas a light of such infernal hue, 100  
 As double horror to the darkness gave,  
 With dread reflection from a dusky wave.  
 Round a black water tatter’d spectres stand,  
 With each a tiny taper in its hand ;  
 Fierce Mendicants ! who strive some alms to win 105  
 From the fair Wanderer, with incessant din.

The Guardian Spirit saw SERENA grieve,  
 To hear of wants she knew not to relieve ;  
 And to the generous Nymph in pity cries :  
 “ The Gulph of Indolence before us lies, 110  
 “ O’er whose dull flood, to which no bank is seen,  
 “ A boat must waft thee to the dome of Spleen.  
 “ These pallid figures, that around thee press,  
 “ And haunt thee with importunate distress,  
 “ On earth were Beggars of each different class, 115  
 “ Tho’ blended here in one promiscuous mass.  
 “ The Poor, who spurn’d kind Industry’s controul,  
 “ The Rich, who begg’d from penury of soul :  
 “ Both by their abject pride alike debas’d,  
 “ Blasphem’d that nature, which they both disgrac’d,  
 “ And, hither by the fullen Fiend convey’d, 121  
 “ Here still they ply their ineffectual trade ;  
 “ In chase of each new passenger they run,  
 “ Condemn’d to beg from all, to gain by none.  
 “ But from these wretches turn thy fruitless care ! 125  
 “ Behold the gulph before thee, and beware !  
 “ Nor



“ Nor touch the stream, which mortal sense o’ercomes,  
 “ And by its baleful charm the soul benumbs !”  
 “ —Can mortal pass ?” the shudd’ring Nymph replied,  
 “ This fullen, flow, unnavigable tide, 130  
 “ In whose black current this enormous mound  
 “ Of shapeless stone appears, this horrid bound,  
 “ That seems an everlasting guard to keep  
 “ O’er the dull waters, that beneath it creep ?”  
 While yet she spoke, with a resounding shock, 135  
 Forth from the arch of the impending rock,  
 Which o’er the murmuring eddy hung so low,  
 The lazy river scarce had room to flow,  
 Of rude construction, and in roughest plight,  
 A boat now issued to SERENA’S sight ; 140  
 An empty boat, that slowly to the shore  
 Advanc’d, without the aid of sail or oar ;  
 Self-mov’d it seem’d, but soon the Nymph beheld  
 A grizly figure, who the stern impell’d.  
 Wading behind, the horrid Form appear’d ; 145  
 Above the water his strong arm he rear’d,  
 And cross the creeping flood the crazy vessel steer’d.

The heavenly Sprite observ'd her trembling Ward,  
 Whose growing fears the hideous pass abhorr'd,  
 And cheering thus she spake : " This Spectre boasts 150  
 " The chief dominion of these dreary coasts :  
 " To him, thy Pilot, without dread conſign,  
 " And place thy body in his bark ſupine !  
 " So thro' this arching rock thou'lt paſs alone,  
 " Safe from the perils of th' incumbent ſtone : 155  
 " Embark undaunted !—on the farther ſide  
 " Thou'lt ſurely find me thy unfailing Guide.  
 " Nor let this Pilot raiſe thy groundleſs dread,  
 " This fullen Charon of the froward dead,  
 " A Phantom, never bleſt with human life, 160  
 " Tho' oft on earth his noxious power is riſe ;  
 " And in that region, ne'er from error free,  
 " The words he dictates are aſſign'd to me.  
 " Obſerve this Fiend, that Nature ſcorn'd to frame,  
 " Offspring of Pride, and Apathy his name ! 165  
 " Paſſions he ne'er can feel, and ne'er impart,  
 " A miſcreated Imp, without a heart ;

" In place of which, his subtle parent pinn'd  
 " A bladder, fill'd with circulating wind,  
 " Which seems with mimic life the mass to warm, 170  
 " And gives false vigour to his bloated form.  
 " But place thee in the boat, his arms direct,  
 " My love shall watch thee, and my power protect."

So spake the friendly Sprite ; th' obedient Maid  
 Her form along the narrow vessel laid : 175

But oh ! what terrors shake her tender soul,  
 As from the shore the bark begins to roll ;  
 And, sever'd from her Friend, her eyes discern  
 The steering Spectre wading at the stern !  
 Far stronger fears her resolution melt, 180  
 Than those, which erst the Bard of Florence felt,  
 When, by the honour'd shade of Virgil led  
 Thro' all the dreary circles of the dead,  
 Hell's fiercest Demons threaten'd to divide  
 The living Poet from his shadowy Guide ; 185  
 And bade him, friendless, and alone, return  
 Thro' the dire horrors of the dark sojourn.



Not long the lovely Fair one's terrors last ;  
 For safely thro' th' impending rock she past :  
 And slow advancing to the gloomy strand, 190  
 The fullen Pilot brings her safe to land.  
 There, fondly hovering on her guardian plumes,  
 The heavenly Monitor her charge resumes ;  
 And smiling, leads along the rocky road,  
 Whose windings open into Spleen's abode. 195

Thou Queen of Shades ! whose spirit-damping spell  
 Too oft is seen the Poet's pride to quell,  
 When the sharp workings of unrelish'd wit  
 Plunge thy pale victim in a bilious fit ;  
 May I, unpunish'd by thy subtle power, 200  
 Dare to display thy subterranean bower,  
 And to this wond'ring upper world explain  
 The shadowy horrors of thy secret reign ?

Entering beneath a wide fantastic arch,  
 Round the drear circuit of the dome they march ; 205  
 Which a pale flash from many a fiery Sprite  
 Frequent illumes with intermitting light ;

Such, as on earth, to Superstition's eye,  
 Denounces ruin from the northern sky,  
 While she discerns, amid the nightly glare, 210  
 Armies embattled in the blazing air.

Around the Nymph unnumber'd phantoms glide ;  
 Here swell the bloated race of bulky Pride :  
 In close and horrid union, there appear  
 The wilder progeny of frantic Fear ; 215  
 Mis-shapen monsters ! whose stupendous frame  
 Abhorrent Nature has refus'd to name.

Here, in Cameleon colours, lightly flit  
 The motley offspring of disorder'd Wit.  
 All things prodigious the wide cave contain'd, 220  
 And forms, beyond what Fable ever feign'd :  
 But, as the worm, that on the dewy green  
 Springs half to view, and half remains unseen,  
 Perceiving near its cell a human tread,  
 Slinks back to earth, and hides its timid head : 225  
 So, where the heavenly Spirit deign'd to lead,  
 The startled spectres from her step recede ;

And,

And, as abash'd they from her eye retire,  
Sink into mist, or melt in fluid fire.

High on an ebon throne, superbly wrought      230  
With each fierce figure of fantastic thought,  
In a deep cove, where no bright beam intrudes,  
O'er her black schemes the fullen Empress broods.  
The Shriek-Owl's mingled with the Raven's plume  
Shed o'er her furrow'd brows an awful gloom;      235  
A garb, that glares with stripes of lurid flame,  
Wraps in terrific pomp her haggard frame;  
Round her a Serpent, as her zone, is roll'd,  
Which writhing, stings itself in every fold.

Near her pavilion, in barbaric state,      240  
Four Mutes the mandates of their Queen await.  
From sickly Fancy bred, by fullen Sloth,  
Both parents' curse, yet pamper'd still by both,  
First stands Disease; an hag of magic power,  
Varying her frightful visage every hour,      245  
Her horrors heightening, as those changes last,  
And each new form more hideous than the past.



Detraction next, a shapeless Fiend, appears,  
 Whose shrivell'd hand a misty mirror rears;  
 Fram'd by malignant Art, th' infernal toy 250  
 Inverts the lovely mien of smiling Joy,  
 Robs roseate Beauty of attractive Grace,  
 And gives a stepdame's frown to Nature's face.  
 The third in place, but with a fiercer air,  
 See the true Gorgon Disappointment glare! 255  
 By whose petrific power Delight's o'erthrown;  
 And Hope's warm heart becomes an icy stone.  
 Last, in a gorgeous robe, that, ill bestow'd,  
 Bows her mean body by its cumbrous load,  
 Stands fretful Discontent, of Fiends the worst, 260  
 By dignity debas'd, by blessings curst,  
 Who poisons Pleasure with the fourest leaven,  
 And makes a Hell of Love's extatic Heaven.

The Guide celestial, near this ghastly group,  
 Perceiv'd her tender Charge with terror droop: 265  
 "Fear not, sweet Maid," she cries, "my steps pursue!  
 "Nor gaze too long on this infernal crew!

"Turn

- " Turn from Detraction's fascinating glafs !  
 " In filence crofs the throne ! obferve, and pafs !  
 " Beyond this dome, the palace of the Queen, 270  
 " Her empire winds thro' many a dreary fcene,  
 " Where ſhe torments, as their deferts require,  
 " Her various victims, that on earth expire ;  
 " Each clafs apart : for in a different cell  
 " The Fierce, the Fretful, and the Sullen dwell : 275  
 " Theſe ſhalt thou ſlightly view, in vapours hurl'd,  
 " And ſwiftly then regain thy native world.  
 " But firſt remark, within that ample nich,  
 " With every quaint device of ſplendor rich,  
 " Yon Phantom, who, from vulgar eyes withdrawn, 280  
 " Appears to ſtretch in one eternal yawn :  
 " Of empire here he holds the tottering helm,  
 " Prime Miniſter in Spleen's diſcordant realm,  
 " The pillar of her ſpreading ſtate, and more,  
 " Her darling offspring, whom on earth ſhe bore ; 285  
 " For, as on earth his wayward mother ſtray'd,  
 " Grandeur, with eyes of fire, her form ſurvey'd,  
 " And!

“ And with strong passion starting from his throne,  
 “ Unloos’d the fullen Queen’s reluctant zone.  
 “ From his embrace, conceiv’d in moody joy, 290  
 “ Rose the round image of a bloated boy :  
 “ His nurse was Indolence ; his tutor Pomp,  
 “ Who kept the child from every childish romp ;  
 “ They rear’d their nursling to the bulk you see,  
 “ And his proud parents call’d their imp ENNUI. 295  
 “ This realm he rules, and in superb attire  
 “ Visits each earthly palace of his Sire :  
 “ A thousand shapes he wears, now pert, now prim,  
 “ Pursues each grave conceit, or idle whim ;  
 “ In arms, in arts, in government engages, 300  
 “ With Monarchs, Poets, Politicians, Sages ;  
 “ But drops each work, the moment it’s begun,  
 “ And, trying all things, can accomplish none :  
 “ Yet o’er each rank, and age, and sex, his sway  
 “ Spreads undiscern’d, and makes the world his prey.  
 “ The light Coquet, amid flirtation, sighs, 306  
 “ To find him lurk in Pleasure’s vain disguise ;

“ And



“ And the grave Nun discovers, in her cell,  
 “ That holy water but augments his spell.  
 “ As the strange monster of the serpent breed, 310  
 “ That haunts, as travellers tell, the marshy mead,  
 “ Devours each nobler beast, tho’ firmly grown  
 “ To size and strength superior to his own ;—  
 “ For on the grazing Horse, or larger Bull,  
 “ Subtly he springs, of dark saliva full, 315  
 “ With swiftly-darting tongue his prey anoints  
 “ With venom, potent to dissolve its joints,  
 “ And, while its bulk in liquid poison swims,  
 “ Swallows its melting bone, and fluid limbs :—  
 “ So this Ennui, this wonder-working Elf, 320  
 “ Can vanquish powers far mightier than himself :  
 “ Nor Wit, nor Science soar his reach above,  
 “ And oft he seizes on successful Love.  
 “ Of all the radiant host who lend their aid  
 “ To light mankind thro’ life’s bewildering shade, 325  
 “ Bright Charity alone, with cloudless ray,  
 “ May boast exemption from his baleful sway :

" Haste then, sweet Nymph, nor let us longer roam  
 " Round the drear circle of this dangerous dome !  
 " Left e'en thy Guide, entangled in his spell, 330  
 " Should fail to guard thee from a Fiend so fell !"

So speaking, the kind Spirit's anxious care  
 Led from the palace the attentive Fair,  
 And, winding thro' a passage dark and rude,  
 Thus the mild Monitor her speech renew'd : 335  
 " 'Gainst Fear and Pity now thy bosom steel,  
 " For fights more horrible I now reveal !  
 " Spleen's tortur'd victims view with dauntless eyes ;  
 " For lo ! her penal realms before thee rise !"

The Nymph advancing saw, with mute amaze, 340  
 A dismal, deep, enormous dungeon blaze.  
 Stones of red fire the hideous wall compos'd ;  
 And massive gates the horrid confine clos'd.  
 Th' infernal Portress of this doleful dome,  
 With fiery lips, that swell'd with poisonous foam, 345  
 Pale Discord, rag'd ; with whose tormenting tongue,  
 Thro' all its caves th' extensive region rung :

A living Vulture was the Fury's crest ;  
 And in her hand a Rattlesnake she preſt,  
 Whoſe angry joints inceſſantly were heard 350  
 To ſound defiance to the ſcreaming Bird.

“ The boundleſs depth of this dire priſon holds  
 “ The untam'd ſpirits of imperious Scolds :  
 “ Nor think that Females only fill the cave !  
 “ Male Termagants have liv'd, and here they rave. 355  
 “ All of each ſex are pent within this pale,  
 “ Who knew no uſe of language, but to rail.”

Thus to her Charge exclaim'd the heavenly Guide,  
 And, as ſhe ſpoke, the portals open'd wide,  
 And to th' obſervance of the ſhuddering Maid, 360  
 Th' immeaſurable den was all diſplay'd.

But oh ! what various noiſes from within  
 Fill the vext air with one ſtupendous din !  
 Mourning's deep groan, and Anger's furious call,  
 Terror's loud cry, and Affectation's ſquall, 365  
 The ſob of Paſſion, the Hyſteric ſcream,  
 And ſhrieks of Frenzy, in its fierce extreme !



In this wild uproar every sound's combin'd,  
That stuns the senses, and distracts the mind.

“ Mark,” (to the Nymph SOPHROSYNE began) 370

“ The fierce Xantippe flaming in the van,

“ The vase, she emptied on the Sage's head,

“ Hangs o'er her own, a different shower to shed ;

“ For, drop by drop, distilling liquid fire,

“ It fills the Vixen with new tropes of ire. 375

“ Beyond the Grecian dame extend your view,

“ And mark the spectre of a modern Shrew !

“ She, who whene'er she din'd; with furious look,

“ Spurn'd her nice food, and bellow'd at her cook,

“ Here justly feels a culinary rack, 380

“ Bound, like Ixion, to a whirling jack.

“ But lo the Tityus of this realm ! whose hulk

“ Is stretch'd supine, and whose enormous bulk

“ To such extent in this wide scene is spread,

“ Nine acres seem too narrow for his bed ! 385

“ This form was once (but many years are past,

“ Since in his Civic furs he breath'd his last)

“ Lord

“ Lord Mayor of London ; his whole life one treat,

“ And all his business but to rail and eat.

“ The circling group of Fish, and Fowl, and Beasts, 390

“ Once crown'd his table, and compos'd his feasts ;

“ For all the creatures (mark this strange event !)

“ Which he devour'd with growling discontent,

“ O'er him their reunited limbs display,

“ The grumbling Glutton's flesh they rend away, 395

“ And find his swelling form a never-failing prey.

“ See ! where nine Bucks have gor'd his monstrous haunch,

“ See ! fifty Turkeys gobble on his paunch !

“ O'er his broad side twelve creeping Turtles spread,

“ And Fowls unnumber'd flutter round his head.” 400

SERENA gaz'd, but soon she turn'd away,

Sick with disgust, and shuddering with dismay.

“ To scenes less hideous let us now repair !”

(Said the kind Guard of the dejected Fair)

And, cheering her faint Charge, her step she led 405

To the near dwelling of the fretful dead.

Of

Of dusky adamant the dungeon rose ;  
 A dingy mirror its dark fides compose,  
 Reflecting, with a thousand quaint grimaces,  
 The pale inhabitants' distorted faces.

410

" Here, like a Dame of Quality array'd,  
 " Sits Peevishness, presiding o'er the shade,  
 " And frowning at her own uncomely mien,  
 " Whose coarse reflection on the wall is seen.  
 " A snarling Lap-dog her right-hand restrains,  
 " Her lap an infant Porcupine contains,  
 " Which, while her fondness tries its wrath to still,  
 " Wounds her each moment with a pointed quill.  
 " The froward Spirits here in durance fret,  
 " Whose testy life was one continued pet ;  
 " Here they in trifles that vexation find,  
 " Which teaz'd on earth their irritated mind.  
 " Observe the Phantom, who with eyes askance  
 " Still to the mirror turns her eager glance !  
 " While on her cheek, at every anxious turn,  
 " Blushes of new mortification burn.

415

420

425

" Beauty



- " Beauty for lasting blifs had form'd the Maid ;  
 " Love to her arms his faithful homage paid ;  
 " But, all this fwelling tide of joy to check,  
 " A fatal Freckle rifes on her neck : 430  
 " Her soft cosmetics the vext Nymph applies,  
 " Succes attends her, and the Freckle dies :  
 " But ah ! this victory avails her not ;  
 " She finds an Hydra in the teasing spot :  
 " Fast as one flies, another still fucceeds, 435  
 " And with eternal food her fretful humour feeds.  
 " Near to the Nymph, in a more moody fit,  
 " See the pale Phantom of a peevish Wit !  
 " Mark with what frowns his eager eyes perufe,  
 " Wet from the prefs, three Critical Reviews ! 440  
 " With wounded Vanity's diftracting rage  
 " How rapidly he runs thro' every page !  
 " He finds fome honours lavifh'd on his Verfe,  
 " And Joy's faint gleams his gloomy fpirit pierce.  
 " But oh ! too foon thefe feeble farks decay ; 445  
 " And keen Vexation reaffumes her prey.

" Hating

" Hating reproof, in every fibre fore,  
 " One cenfur'd particle torments him more,  
 " More than a hundred happier lines delight,  
 " Which liberal favour condescends to cite. 450  
 " But time will fail us, if we pause to view  
 " The various torments of the testy crew;  
 " These wretched chymists, whose o'erheated brain  
 " Extracts from nothing a substantial pain.  
 " Yet, ere to different districts we advance, 455  
 " Take of one fretful tribe a transient glance!  
 " Their unsuspected punishments supply  
 " A lesson, useful to the Female eye.  
 " Spleen's liveliest agent here beguiles the gay,  
 " Fair to attract, and flattering to betray." 460  
 As thus the kind ætherial Guardian spoke,  
 Within a rock, whence plaintive murmurs broke,  
 She touch'd a secret spring, whose power was such,  
 Two jarring doors unfolded at the touch,  
 And, with the charms of regal splendor bright, 465  
 A chearful banquet sparkles to the sight.

Viands so light, so elegantly grac'd,  
 Might tempt e'en Temperance herself to taste ;  
 For Fruits alone compos'd th' inticing treat,  
 Fair to the eye, and to the palate sweet. 470  
 In such bright juice the Pear and Cherry swim,  
 As make the Topaz and the Ruby dim.  
 Here crown'd with every flower, and gaily drest  
 In all the glitter of a Gallic vest,  
 Whose ample folds her loathsome body screen'd, 475  
 A child of Luxury reigns, a subtle Fiend !  
 Who, with a grace that every heart allures,  
 Smiles on the lustre of her rich *liqueurs*.  
 Her fatal smiles their utmost power exert  
 To poison Beauty at her dire dessert ; 480  
 To blast the rose that Health's bright cheek adorns,  
 And fill each festive heart with latent thorns :  
 For the sly Fiend, of every art possesst,  
 Steals on th' affection of her Female guest ;  
 And, by her soft address seducing each, 485  
 Eager she plies them with a Brandy Peach :



They with keen lip the luscious fruit devour ;  
But swiftly feel its peace-destroying power.

Quick thro' each vein new tides of frenzy roll :

All evil passions kindle in the foul, 490

Drive from each feature every chearful grace,

And glare ferocious in the fallow face ;

The wounded nerves in furious conflict tear,

Then sink, in blank dejection and despair.

Effects more dire, thus tempting to deceive, 495

The Apple wrought not in the soul of Eve ;

Howe'er disguis'd, in Jelly or in Jam,

Spleen has no poison surer than a Dram.

“ But haste we now,” (the heavenly Leader cries)

“ To where this penal world's last wonder lies !” 500

She spoke ; and led the Nymph thro' deeper dells,

Low-murmuring vaults, and horror-breathing cells.

And now they pass a perforated cage,

Where rancorous Spectres without number rage.

“ Avert thine eye !” (the heavenly Spirit said) 505

“ Nor view these abject tribes of envious dead !

“ Who

" Who pin'd to hear the voice of Truth proclaim  
 " A Sister's beauty, or a Brother's fame !  
 " Tho' crown'd with all Prosperity imparts,  
 " High in their various ranks, and several arts ; 510  
 " Yet, meanly sunk by Envy's base controul,  
 " They died in that consumption of the soul ;  
 " And here, thro' bars that twisted Adders make,  
 " And the long volumes of th' envenom'd Snake,  
 " O'er this dark road they dart an anxious eye, 515  
 " Still envying every Fiend, that flutters by.  
 " Pass ! and regard them not !" —Th' attentive Maid  
 In silent tremor the behest obey'd.

This dungeon cleft, her weary feet she drags  
 Thro' winding caverns, and o'er icy crags : 520  
 Soul-chilling damps in the dark passage reign,  
 Which issues on a vast and dreary plain,  
 Fann'd by no breezes, with no verdure crown'd ;  
 The black horizon is its only bound.  
 And now advancing, in a drizzly mist, 525  
 Thro' fullen Phantoms, hating to exist,

SERENA spies, high o'er his subjects plac'd,  
 The ghastly Tyrant of the gloomy waste.  
 Murmuring he sits upon a rocking stone,  
 Th' unstable base of his ill-founded throne : 530  
 Hideous his face, and horrible his frame,  
 Misanthropy the grizzly Monster's name !  
 Him to fierce Pride, with raging passion fore,  
 The frowning Gorgon, Disappointment, bore ;  
 On earth detested, and by heaven abhorr'd, 535  
 Of this drear wild he reigns the moody lord.  
 Few are the subjects of his waste domain,  
 And scarce a Female in his frightful train ;  
 Except one changing corps of ancient Prudes :  
 Reluctant here the prying band intrudes. 540  
 Each, who on earth, behind her artful fan,  
 Feign'd coarse aversion to the creature Man,  
 Is doom'd, in this dark region, to abide  
 Some transient pains for hypocritic pride.  
 Here ever-during chains those Scoffers bind, 545  
 Whose writings deaden and debase the mind ;

Who



Who mock Creation with injurious scorn,  
And feel a fancied void in Plenty's horn.

In his right hand, an emblem of his cares,  
A branch of Aconite the Monarch bears ; 550  
And those four Phantoms, who this region haunt,  
He feeds with berries from this deadly plant ;  
For, strange to tell ! tho' fever'd from its root,  
The bough still blackens with successive fruit.

The tribes, who taste it, burst into a fit 555  
Of raving mockery and rancorous wit ;  
And, pleas'd their Tyrant's ghastly smile to court,  
By vile distortions make him various sport.

The frantic rabble, who his sway confess,  
Before his throne an hideous Puppet dress ; 560  
When in unseemly rags they have array'd

The image, from their own dark semblance made,  
In horrid gambols round their work they throng,  
With antic dance and rude discordant song ;

Satire's rank offals on the block they fling, 565  
And call it Nature, to delight their King :

While

While in their features he exults to see  
 The frowns of Torture, mixt with grins of Glee.  
 For, as these abject toils engage the crew,  
 Their own grim idol darkens to their view ; 570  
 Wide and more wide its horrid stature spreads,  
 And o'er the tribe new consternation sheds :  
 For each forgets, in his bewilder'd gaze,  
 'Tis but a Monster, which he help'd to raise.  
 As o'er its form their dizzy glances roll, 575  
 It strikes a cheerless damp thro' all the soul.  
 Vainly to shun the baleful sight they try,  
 It draws for ever the reluctant eye :  
 At each review with deeper dread they start ;  
 A colder chaos numbs each freezing heart. 580  
 No mutual confidence, no friendly care,  
 Relieves the panic they are doom'd to bear ;  
 For as they shrink absorb'd in wild affright,  
 When each to each inclines his wounded fight,  
 They feel, for social comfort, sour disgust, 585  
 And all the fullen anguish of distrust.

“ Now mark, SERENA !” (the mild Guide began)

“ The proudest Phantom of the gloomy clan,

“ Appointed, by this furly Monarch’s grace,

“ High-priest of all his Misanthropic race ! 590

“ See o’er the croud a throne of vapours lift

“ That strange and motley form, the shade of SWIFT !

“ Now shalt thou view” (the guardian Sprite pursues)

“ His horrid pennance, that each day renews :

“ Perchance its terrors may o’erwhelm thy sense, 595

“ But trust my care to bear thee safely hence !”

As thus she spoke, above the gazing throng,

High in a sailing cloud the Spectre swept along.

Vain of his power, of elocution proud,

In mystic language he harangu’d the crowd ; 600

The bounds he mark’d, with measure so precise,

Of Equine virtue, and of Human vice,

That, cursing Nature’s gifts, without remorse,

Each sullen hearer wish’d himself a Horse.

Pleas’d with the pure effect his sermon wrought, 605

Th’ ambitious Priest a rich Tiara caught,

Which,



Which, hovering o'er his high-aspiring head,  
Sarcastic Humour dangled by a thread.

The rich Tiara, for his temples fit,  
Blaz'd with each polish'd gem of brilliant wit; 610

And sharp-fac'd Irony, his darling Sprite,  
Who rais'd her patron to this giddy height,

Fast on his brow the dangerous honour bound,  
But, in the moment that her Priest was crown'd,  
His airy throne dissolv'd, and thunder rent the ground. }

Forth from the yawning earth, with lightning's speed, 616

Sprung the fierce phantom of a fiery Steed,

Spurring his sides, whence bloody poison flow'd,

The ghastly-grinning Fiend, Derision, rode.

In her right-hand a horrid whip she shakes, 620

Whose sounding lash was form'd of knotted snakes :

An uncouth bugle her left-hand display'd,

From a grey monkey's skull by Malice made ;

As her distorted lips this whistle blew,

Forth rush'd the Spectre of a wild Yahoo. 625

See

See the poor Wit in hasty terror spring,  
 And fly for succour to his grizzly King !  
 In vain his piercing cries that succour court :  
 The grizzly King enjoys the cruel sport.  
 Behold the fierce Yahoo, her victim caught, 630  
 Drive her sharp talons thro' the seat of thought !  
 That copious fountain, which too well supplied  
 Perverted Ridicule's malignant tide.  
 Quick from her steed the grinning Fiend descends,  
 From the pierc'd skull the spleenful brain she rends, 635  
 To black Misanthropy, her ghastly King,  
 See the keen Hag this horrid present bring !  
 Her daily gift ! for, as each day arrives,  
 Her destin'd victim for new death revives.  
 The Huntress now, this direst pageant past, 640  
 On her wild bugle blew so dread a blast,  
 The sharp sound pierc'd thro' all the depths of Hell ; }  
 The Fiends all answer'd in one hideous yell, }  
 And in a fearful trance the soft SERENA fell. }

Hence from the lovely Nymph her senses fled, 645  
Till, thro' the parted curtains of her bed,  
The amorous Sun, who now began to rise,  
Kist, with a sportive beam, her opening eyes.

END OF THE THIRD CANTO.

CANTO



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C A N T O IV.

**H**A I L, thou enlighten'd Globe of human joy !  
 Where social cares the soften'd heart employ :  
 What cheering rays of vital comfort roll  
 In thy bright regions o'er the rescued soul,  
 Which, 'scaping from the dark domain of Spleen,       5  
 Springs with new warmth to thy attractive scene !  
 Once more I bless thy pleasure-breathing gale,  
 And gaze enchanted on thy flowery vale,  
 Where smiling Innocence, and ardent Youth,  
 Sport hand in hand with Beauty and with Truth.       10  
 Sport on, sweet revellers ! in rosy bowers,  
 Safe from th' intrusion of all evil Powers !  
 Ah fruitless wish of the benignant Muse,  
 Which to this chequer'd world the Fates refuse !  
 For round its precincts many an ugly Sprite       15  
 Speeds undiscern'd to poison pure delight :

Amidst the foremost of this haggard band,  
 Unwearied poster of the sea and land,  
 Wrapt in dark mists, malignant Scandal flies,  
 While Envy's poison'd breath the buoyant gale supplies.  
 Tho' SHERIDAN, with shafts of comic wit, 21  
 Pierc'd, and expos'd her to the laughing Pit,  
 Th' immortal Hag still wears her paper crown,  
 The dreaded Empress of the idle Town :  
 O'erleaping her prerogative of old, 25  
 To sink the noble, to defame the bold ;—  
 In chace of Worth to flip the dogs of Strife,  
 Thro' all the ample range of public life ;—  
 The Tyrant now, that sanctuary burst  
 Where Happiness by Privacy is nurs'd, 30  
 Her fury rising as her powers encrease,  
 O'erturns the altars of domestic Peace.  
 Pleas'd in her dark and gall-distilling cloud  
 The sportive form of Innocence to shroud,  
 Beauty's young train her baleful eyes survey, 35  
 To mark the fairest, as her favourite prey.

Hence,

Hence, sweet SERENA, while thy spirit stray'd  
 Round the deep realms of subterranean shade,  
 This keenest agent of th' infernal Powers  
 On earth was busied in those tranquil hours, 40  
 To blast thy peace, and poison'd darts to aim  
 Against the honour of thy spotless name :  
 For Scandal, restless Fiend, who never knows  
 The balmy blessing of an hour's repose,  
 Worn, yet unfated with her daily toil, 45  
 In her base work consumes the midnight oil.  
 O'er fiercer Fiends when heavy slumbers creep,  
 When wearied Avarice and Ambition sleep,  
 Scandal is vigilant, and keen to spread  
 The plagues that spring from her prolific head. 50  
 On Truth's fair basis she her falsehood builds,  
 With tinsel sentiment its surface gilds ;  
 To nightly labour from their dark abodes  
 The Demons of the groaning Press she goads,  
 And smiles to see their rapid art supply 55  
 Ten thousand wings to every infant lye.

In



In triumph now behold the Hag applaud  
 Her keen and fav'rite Imp, ingenious Fraud,  
 Her quick Compositor, whose flying hand  
 Has clos'd the paragraph she keenly plann'd. 60

No Nymph she nam'd, yet mark'd her vile intent,  
 That Dullness could not miss the name she meant :  
 In Satire's tints the injur'd Fair she drew,  
 In form an Angel, but in soul a Jew.

It chanc'd her Sire among his friends inroll'd 65  
 A wealthy Senator, infirm and old ;  
 Who, dup'd too early by a generous heart,  
 Rashly assum'd a Misanthropic part :

Tho' peevish fancies would his mind incrust,  
 Good-nature's image lurk'd beneath their rust ; 70

And gay SERENA, with that sportive wit  
 Which heals the folly that it deigns to hit,  
 Would oft the sickness of his soul beguile,

And teach the fullen humorist to smile ;  
 Pleas'd by her virtuous frolics to assuage 75  
 The mental anguish of distemper'd age.

This ancient friend, in a sarcastic sketch,  
 Was mark'd by Scandal as a monied wretch,  
 For whom the young, yet mercenary Fair  
 Had subtly spread a matrimonial snare. 80

With such base matter, more diffusely wrought,  
 The spirit-piercing paragraph was fraught,  
 O'er which with glee the eye of Scandal glar'd,  
 Which for the opening Press herself prepar'd;  
 She on the types her inky wad let fall, 85  
 And smear'd each letter with her bitterest gall;  
 The Press, whose ready gripe the charge receives,  
 Stamps it successive on ten thousand leaves,  
 Which pil'd in heaps impatient seem to lie,  
 They only wait the dawn of day to fly. 90

Now, as the trembling child, which long has laid  
 Mute in the dark, and of itself afraid,  
 When, haply conscious of the pain it feels,  
 The watchful mother to its pillow steals,  
 Springs to her breast, and shakes off all alarms, 95  
 Feeling its safety in her fostering arms.

With

With such quick joy, in innocence as young,  
 The soft SERENA from her pillow sprung,  
 Pleas'd to awake from her terrific dream,  
 And feel the chearful Sun's returning beam. 100  
 Eager she rose, in busy thought, nor staid  
 The wonted summons of her punctual Maid,  
 And as her own fair hands adjust her vest,  
 The guardian Cincture flutters on her breast ;  
 For fondly, when she wak'd, or when she slept, 105  
 Still round her heart th' important Zone she kept.  
 Thou happy Girdle ! to thy charge be just !  
 Firm be thy threads, and faithful to their trust ;  
 For hours approach, when all the stores they hide  
 Of magic virtue, must be strongly tried !— 110  
 Now, while her kind domestic heart intends  
 To please her early Sire, the Nymph descends ;  
 But sleep, who left the Fair with sudden flight,  
 With late wings hover'd o'er the good old Knight ;  
 And the chill circle of the lone saloon 115  
 Informs the shiv'ring Maid she rose too soon.

'Tis



'Tis true, attentive John's unfailing care  
 Began the rites of breakfast to prepare ;  
 But yet no fires on the cold altar burn,  
 No smoke arises from the silver urn, 120  
 And the blank tea-board, where no viands lay,  
 Only supplied the Paper of the day.

Tho' mild SERENA's peace-devoted mind  
 The keen debate of politics declin'd,  
 And heard with cold contempt, or generous hate, 125  
 The frauds of Party and the lies of State ;  
 Nor car'd much more for Fashion's loose intrigues,  
 Than factious bickerings, or foreign leagues ;  
 Yet, while she faunters idle and alone,  
 Her careless eyes are on the Paper thrown. 130

As some gay Youth, whom sportive friends engage  
 To view the furious Ourang in his cage,  
 If while amus'd he sees the monster grin,  
 And trusts too careless to the bolts within,  
 If the fly Beast, as near the grate he draws, 135  
 Tear him unguarded with projected paws,

Starts at the wound, and feels his bosom thrill  
 With pain and wonder at the sudden ill :  
 So did SERENA start, so wildly gaze,  
 In such mixt pangs of anguish and amaze, 140  
 Feeling the wound which Scandal had design'd  
 To lacerate her mild and modest mind.  
 Startled, as one who from electric wire  
 Unheeding catches unsuspected fire,  
 She reads, then almost doubts that she has read, 145  
 And thinks some vision hovers round her head.  
 Now, her fixt eye some striking words confine,  
 And now she darts it thrice thro' every line ;  
 Nor could Amazement more her senses shake,  
 Had every letter been a Gorgon's snake. 150  
 Now rising Indignation takes its turn,  
 And her flush'd cheeks with tingling blushes burn,  
 With restless motion and with many a frown,  
 Thro' the wide room she paces up and down :  
 Now, musing, makes a momentary stand, 155  
 The fatal Paper fluttering in her hand.

So the shy Bird, by cruel sportsmen sprung,  
 And by their random fire severely stung,  
 Scar'd, not disabled, by the distant wound,  
 Now trembling flies, now skims along the ground, 160  
 Now vainly tries, in some sequester'd spot,  
 From her gor'd breast to shake the galling shot.

Ye tender Nymphs! whose kindling souls would flame,  
 Touch'd, like SERENA's, by injurious blame,  
 O let your quick and kindred spirits form 165  
 A vivid picture of the mental storm  
 In which she labour'd, and whose force to paint  
 The Muse's strongest tints appear too faint;  
 In sympathetic thought her suffering see!  
 But O, for ever from such wrongs be free! 170

Her faithful Girdle try'd its power to save,  
 And oft a monitory impulse gave;  
 Still unregarded, still unfelt, it prest  
 With useless energy her heaving breast,  
 Her mind, forgetful of the magic Zone, 175  
 Full of the burning shaft by Scandal thrown,



With blended notes of sorrow and disdain,  
Thus in disorder'd language vents its pain :—

“ Had Malice dar'd my honour to defame,

“ The self-refuted lie had lost its aim : 180

“ But here the world, deceiv'd by sland'rous art,

“ Must think SERENA has a venal heart.”

A venal heart ! at that detested sound,

In swelling anguish her sunk voice was drown'd.

Now was a fearful crisis of her fate : 185

Distended now by Passion's growing weight,

And for its Mistress fill'd with conscious dread,

The magic Girdle crack'd thro' every thread,

And snapp'd perchance by Scandal's force accurst,

From her full heart the guardian Zone had burst, 190

And, spite of all the virtues of the Fair,

The spell of Happiness had sunk in air,

But that SOPHROSYNE, whose friendly fear

Timely foresaw this trial too severe,

An early succour gain'd from secret Love, 195

From the fell Kite to snatch the falling Dove.

As Nature studies, in her wide domain,  
 To blend some antidote with every bane ;  
 Thus her kind aid the friendly Power contriv'd,  
 That, from the quarter whence the wound arriv'd, 200  
 There flow'd, the anguish of that wound to calm,  
 A soothing, soft, and medicinal balm.  
 As in her agitated hand the Fair  
 Wav'd the loose Paper with disorder'd air,  
 In capitals she saw SERENA flame : 205  
 She blush'd, she shudder'd, as she view'd the name ;  
 Her ready fears subside in new surprize,  
 And eager thus she reads with lighten'd eyes :—

“ Go, faithful Sonnet, to SERENA say  
 “ What charms peculiar in her features reign : 210  
 “ A stranger, whom her glance may ne'er survey,  
 “ Pays her this tribute in no flattering strain.  
 “ Tell her, the Bard, in Beauty's ample reign,  
 “ Has seen a virgin cheek as richly glow,

“ A

“ A bosom, where the blue meandring vein 215

“ Sheds as soft lustre thro’ the lucid snow,

“ Eyes, that as brightly flash with joy and youth,

“ And locks, that like her own luxuriant flow:

“ Then say, for then she cannot doubt thy truth,

“ ‘That the wide earth no Female form can shew 220

“ Where Nature’s legend so distinctly tells,

“ In this fair shrine a fairer spirit dwells.”

With curious wonder the reviving Maid

View’d this fond homage to her beauty paid ;

A second glance o’er every line she cast, 225

And half pronounc’d and half suppress’d the last,

While modest Pleasure, and ingenuous Pride,

Her burning cheek with deeper crimson dy’d.

O Praise ! thy language was by Heaven design’d

As manna to the faint bewilder’d mind : 230

Beauty and Diffidence, whose hearts rejoice

In the kind comfort of thy cheering voice,

In



In this wild wood of life, wert thou not nigh,  
 Must, like the wandering Babes, lie down and die :  
 But thy sweet accents wake new vital powers, 235  
 And make this thorny path a path of flowers :  
 As oil on Ocean's troubled waters spread,  
 Smooths the rough billow to a level bed,  
 The soothing Rhyme thus soften'd into rest  
 The painful tumult of SERENA's breast. 240

Now, to herself restor'd, the conscious Maid  
 The lurking Fiend's insidious snare survey'd ;  
 Her nerves, with grateful trepidation, own  
 A lighter pressure from the faithful Zone ;  
 And in fond thought she breathes a thankful prayer 245  
 For her ætherial Guardian's constant care ;  
 Yet with a keen desire her bosom glow'd,  
 To hear from whom the gentle Sonnet flow'd ;  
 But kind SOPHROSYNE, who watch'd unseen,  
 To shield her votary from the wiles of Spleen, 250  
 As friendly Love had fixt a future time,  
 When to reveal the secret of the Rhyme,

Strove till that hour her fancy to restrain,

Nor let her anxious wishes rise to pain.

As Gaiety's fresh tide began to roll, 255

Fast in the swelling channel of her soul,

The good old Knight descends, tho' eager, slow,

The Gout still tingling in his tender toe ;

And now, paternal salutations past,

His eyes he keenly on the Paper cast, 260

While his sweet Daughter, with attentive grace,

Before him flies his ready cup to place ;

For Tea and Politics alternate share,

In friendly rivalry, his morning care.

Tho' smooth as oil the Knight's good-humour flows, 265

When the mild breeze of pleasant fortune blows,

Yet, quick to catch the casual sparks of ire,

Like oil it kindles into mountain fire ;

And fiercely now his flaming spirit blaz'd,

While on those galling words he wildly gaz'd, 270

Whose force had almost work'd into a storm

The gentler elements in Beauty's form.

As

As the sarcastic sentence caught his view,  
 Back from the board his elbow-chair he drew,  
 And, by sharp stings of sudden fury prick'd, 275  
 Far from his foot his gouty stool he kick'd.  
 Fierce as Achilles, by Atrides stung,  
 He pour'd the stream of vengeance from his tongue.  
 But ah, those angry threats he deign'd to speak,  
 Had sounds, alas ! far differing from the Greek. 280  
 Rage from his lips in legal language broke ;  
 Of Juries and of Damages he spoke,  
 And on the Printer's law-devoted head,  
 He threaten'd deep revenge in terms most dread ;  
 Terms, that with pain the ear of Beauty pierce, 285  
 And oaths too rough to harmonize in verse.

While thus the good old Knight, with passion hot,  
 His Toast neglected, and his Tea forgot,  
 The discord of the drama to increase,  
 Now Prim PENELOPE assails her Niece ; 290  
 For, as Sir GILBERT now, with choler dumb,  
 Points her the period with his angry thumb,



“ Ah ! Brother,” cries the stiff, malignant crone,  
(Her sharp eye swiftly thro’ the sentence thrown)

“ Scandal could never rise to heights like this, 295

“ But from the manners of each modern Miss;

“ Had but my Niece, less giddy and more grave,

“ Observ’d the prudent hints I often gave——”

The honest Knight her vile conclusion saw,  
And quick curtail’d it with a testy “ Pshaw !” 300

Mean while the gentle Maid, who heard the taunt,

Survey’d without a frown her prudish Aunt :

Far other thoughts employ’d her softer mind,

To one sweet purpose all her soul inclin’d ;

How she might close th’ unpleasant scene, how best 305

Restore good-humour to her Father’s breast.

Her airy Guardian with delight survey’d

These tender wishes in the lovely Maid,

And, to accomplish what her heart desir’d,

Trains of new thought above her age inspir’d. 310

As Venus on her son’s enlighten’d face

Shed richer charms, and more attractive grace,

When,

When, issuing forth from the dissolving cloud,  
His bright form burst on the admiring croud :

So kind SOPHROSYNE, unseen, supplies 315

A livelier radiance to SERENA's eyes ;

And, ere she speaks, to captivate her Sire,

Touches her lips with patriotic fire.

It chanc'd, that, tofs'd upon a vacant chair,

A volume of that Wit lay near the Fair, 320

Whose value, try'd by Fashion's varying touch,

Once rose too high, and now is sunk too much ;

The book, which Fortune plac'd within her reach,

Contain'd, O CHESTERFIELD, the liberal speech

In which thy spirit, like an Attic Sage,

325 }

Strove to defend the violated Stage

From fetters basely forg'd by Ministerial rage.

From this the Nymph her useful lesson took,

And thus began, reclining on the Book :—

“ If on this noble Lord we may rely,

330

“ Scandal is but a speck on Freedom's eye ;

" And Public Spirit, then, will rather bear  
 " The casual pain it gives by growing there,  
 " Than, by a rash attempt to move it thence,  
 " Hazard the safety of a precious Sense, 335  
 " And, by the efforts of a vain desire,  
 " Rob this life-darting eye of all its fire.  
 " Tho' the soft breast of Innocence may smart,  
 " By cruel Calumny's corroding dart,  
 " Yet would she rather ache in every nerve, 340  
 " And bear those pangs she knows not to deserve,  
 " Much rather than be made a senseless tool,  
 " To aid the frenzy of tyrannic rule,  
 " Or forge one dangerous bolt for Power to aim  
 " At sacred Liberty's superior frame."— 345

As ancient Chiefs were wont of old to gaze,  
 With eyes of tender awe and fond amaze,  
 On the fair Priestesses of the Delphic fane,  
 When first she utter'd her prophetic strain,  
 Entranc'd in wonder, thus Sir GILBERT view'd 350  
 His child, yet more inspir'd, who thus pursu'd :



" For me, I own, these lines, with gall replete,  
 " Shot thro' my simple heart a sudden heat ;  
 " But happier thoughts my rising rage repress,  
 " And turn'd the pointless insult to a jest : 355  
 " And O ! should Slander still new wrath awake,  
 " Still may my Father, for his Daughter's sake,  
 " Disdain the vengeance of litigious strife,  
 " And let SERENA's answer be—her life !”

She ended with a smile, whose magic flame 360  
 Shot youthful vigour thro' her Father's frame :  
 His Age, his Anger, and his Gout, are fled ;  
 " Enchanting Girl !" with tears of joy, he said,  
 " Enchanting Girl !" twice echoed from his tongue,  
 As, speaking, from his elbow-chair he sprung, 365  
 " Come to thy Father's arms !—By Heaven, thou art  
 " His own true offspring, and a Whig in heart.”

He spoke ; and his fond arms around her curl'd  
 With proud grasp, seeming to infold the world.  
 Her conscious heart she feels with triumph beat, 370  
 And joys to find that triumph is complete ;

For

For stiff PENELOPE, who near them stood,  
 " Albeit unused to the melting mood,"  
 Squeez'd from her eye-lid one reluctant tear,  
 And soften'd with a smile her brow severe; 375  
 But 'twas a smile of such a gloomy grace,  
 As lighten'd once upon Aleto's face,  
 When Orpheus past her, leading back to life,  
 From Pluto's regions, his recover'd wife,  
 When Love connubial, join'd to Music's spell, 380  
 Moist'n'd with tender joy the eyes of Hell.  
 Far other smiles, with Pleasure's softest air,  
 Gild the gay features of the youthful Fair :  
 She looks like sportive Spring, when her young charms  
 Wind round her hoary Sire's reluctant arms, 385  
 And, by a frolic infantine embrace,  
 Banish the rugged frown from Winter's face.

Thro' the long day she felt the glowing tide  
 Of exultation thro' her bosom glide ;  
 And oft she wish'd for slow-approaching Night, 390  
 To hold sweet converse with her guardian Sprite.

At

At length the hour approach'd her heart desir'd,  
 And, in her lonely chamber now retir'd,  
 Her tender fancy gave the fondest scope  
 To ardent Gratitude and eager Hope. 395

“ Dear airy Being !” (the soft Nymph exclaim'd)  
 “ Whose power can break the spell that Spleen has fram'd,  
 “ Can, by the waving of thy fightless wing,  
 “ O'er darkest forms a golden radiance fling,  
 “ And make, in minds by sorriest thoughts perplex, 400  
 “ This moment's grief the triumph of the next;  
 “ I bless thy succour in each trial past;  
 “ Be present still, and save me in the last.”

Thus, with her lovely eyes devoutly fixt,  
 Where rays of hope, and fear, and reverence mixt, 405  
 The tender Fair her faithful Guard address'd,  
 Then with her cheek her downy pillow prest;  
 But long her wakeful lids refuse to close,  
 For Curiosity dispels repose.  
 Her busy mind the mystic veil would pierce, 410  
 That hides the Author of the pleasing Verse;



Her lips involuntary catch the chime,  
 And half articulate the soothing Rhyme,  
 Till weary Thought no longer watch can keep,  
 But sinks reluctant in the folds of Sleep.

415

END OF THE FOURTH CANTO.

CANTO

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C A N T O V.

WHY art thou fled, O blest poetic time,  
 When Fancy wrought the miracles of Rhyme ;  
 When, darting from her star-encircled throne,  
 Her Poet's eye commanded worlds unknown ;  
 When, by her fiat made a mimic God, 5  
 He saw Existence waiting on his nod,  
 And at his pleasure into being brought  
 New shadowy hosts, the vassals of his thought,  
 In Joy's gay garb, in Terror's dread array,  
 Darker than night, and brighter than the day ; 10  
 Who, at his bidding, thro' the wilds of air,  
 Rais'd willing mortals far from earthly care,  
 And led them wondering thro' his wide domain,  
 Beyond the bounds of Nature's narrow reign ;  
 While their rapt spirits, in the various flight, 15  
 Shook with successive thrills of new delight ?

Return, sweet season, grac'd with Fiction's flowers,  
 Let not cold System cramp thy genial powers !  
 Shall mild Morality, in garb uncouth,  
 The housewife garb of plain and homely Truth,      20  
 Robb'd by stern Method of her rosy crown,  
 Chill her faint votaries by a wintry frown ?  
 No ; thou sweet friend of Man, as suits thee best,  
 Shine forth in Fable's rich-embroider'd vest !  
 O make my Verse thy vehicle, thy arms,      25  
 To spread o'er social life thy potent charms !  
 And thou, SOPHROSYNE, mysterious Sprite !  
 If haply I may trace thy steps aright,  
 Roving thro' paths untrod by mortal feet,  
 To paint for human eyes thy heavenly seat,      30  
 Shed on my soul some portion of that power,  
 Which fav'd SERENA in the trying hour,  
 To bear those trials, which, however hard,  
 As Bards all tell us, may befall the Bard ;  
 The Fop's pert jest, the Critic's frown severe,      35  
 Learning's proud cant, with Envy's artful sneer,

And,



And, the vext Poet's last and worst disgrace,  
 His cold blank Bookseller's rhyme-freezing face.  
 Hence ! ye dark omens, that to Spleen belong,  
 Ye shall not check the current of my song, 40  
 While Beauty's lovely race, for whom I sing,  
 Fire my warm hand to strike the ready string.

As Quiet now her lightest mantle laid  
 O'er the still senses of the sleeping Maid,  
 Her nightly Visitant, her faithful Guide, 45  
 Descends in all her Empyrean pride ;  
 That Fairy shape no more she deigns to wear,  
 Whose light foot smooths the furrow plough'd by care  
 In mortal faces, while her tiny spear  
 Gives a kind tingle to the caution'd ear. 50  
 Now, in her nobler shape, of heavenly size,  
 She strikes her votary's soul with new surprize.  
 Jove's favourite daughter, arm'd in all his powers,  
 Appear'd less brilliant to th' attending Hours,  
 When, on the golden car of Juno rais'd, 55  
 In heavenly pomp the Queen of Battles blaz'd :

With all her lustre, but without the dread  
 Which from her arm the frowning Gorgon shed,  
 SOPHROSYNE descends, with guardian Love,  
 To waft her gentle Ward to worlds above. 60  
 From her fair brow a radiant diadem  
 Rose in twelve stars, and every separate gem  
 Shot magic rays, of virtue to controul  
 Some passion hostile to the human soul.  
 Round her sweet form a robe of æther flow'd, 65  
 And in a wondrous car the smiling Spirit rode ;  
 Firm as pure ivory, it charm'd the sight  
 With finer polish and a softer white.  
 The hand of Beauty, with an easy swell,  
 Scoop'd the free concave like a bending shell ; 70  
 And on its rich exterior, Art display'd  
 The triumphs of the Power the car convey'd.  
 Here, in celestial tints, surpassing life,  
 Sate lovely Gentleness, disarming Strife ;  
 There, young Affection, born of tender Thought, 75  
 In rosy chains the fiercer Passions caught ;

Ambition, with his sceptre snapt in twain,  
 And Avarice, scorning what his chests contain.  
 Round the tame Vulture flies the fearless Dove ;  
 Soft Innocence embraces playful Love ; 80  
 And laughing Sport, the frolic Child of Air,  
 Buries in flowers the sinking form of Care.

These figures, pencil'd with a touch so light,  
 That every image seem'd an heavenly Sprite,  
 Breathe on the car ; whose sight-enchancing frame 85  
 Four wheels sustain, of pale and purple flame ;  
 For no fleet animals, to earth unknown,  
 Bear thro' ætherial fields this flying throne.  
 As by the subtle electrician's skill,  
 Globes seem to fly, obedient to his will ; 90  
 So these four circles of instinctive fire  
 Move by the impulse of their Queen's desire,  
 Mount or descend by her directing care,  
 Or rest, supported by the buoyant air.

Now, springing from her car, that hovering staid 95  
 High in the chamber of the sleeping Maid,

The



The Goddess, with a voice divinely clear,  
Breath'd these kind accents in her Votary's ear :—

“ Come, my fair Champion, who so well hast fought

“ The useful battles of contentious Thought ; 100

“ To aid thy gentle spirit to sustain

“ The final conflict of thy destin'd pain,

“ View the rewards that, in my realms of bliss,

“ Wait the sweet Victor in such war as this !

“ So haply may thy mind, with strength renew'd, 105

“ The dark devices of the Fiend elude ;

“ By one blest effort seal thy triumphs past,

“ And gain thy promis'd guerdon in the last.”

As thus she spake, her heavenly arms embrac'd,

And in the car the conscious Maiden plac'd. 110

Quick at her wish the flaming wheels ascend,

No clouds impede them, wheresoe'er they bend.

As thro' the empire of the winds they rush'd,

The winds were all in mute submission hush'd ;

And now SERENA, from th' exalted car, 115

Look'd down, astonish'd, on each sinking star ;

Flying

Flying o'er lucid orbs, whose distant light  
 Yet has not reach'd the scope of human sight :  
 And now, not distant from the bounds of Space,  
 The guardian Sprite suspends their rapid race ; 120  
 And, while in deep amaze the Nymph admires  
 The circling meteors' inoffensive fires,  
 Pleas'd at her wonder, the mild Power address'd,  
 With kind intelligence, her earthly guest :—  
 “ Of those three Orbs, that in yon chrystal sphere 125  
 “ A separate system in themselves appear,  
 “ The last, whose luminous and steady form  
 “ Shines softly bright, and moderately warm,  
 “ Contains my palace, and the gentle train  
 “ Whom I have wafted to this pure domain. 130  
 “ At equal distance my dominions lie  
 “ From these two larger worlds, more near thine eye :  
 “ Observe their difference as our wheels advance,  
 “ And passing, take of each a transient glance.”  
 So speaking, to the grosser globe she sprung, 135  
 Her car suspended o'er its surface hung,

In heavy air ; for round this orb was roll'd  
 A circling vapour, dull, and damp, and cold.  
 " Here," says SOPHROSYNE, " those Beings dwell,  
 " Who wanted foul to act or ill or well ; 140  
 " Who faunter'd thoughtless thro' their mortal time,  
 " Without a Care, a Virtue, or a Crime :  
 " Here still they faunter, in this languid scene ;  
 " But pass the dozing crowd, and mark their Queen."  
 And now, slow riding on a Tortoise' back, 145  
 Her features lifeless, and each fibre slack,  
 Full in their view the Nymph Indifference came ;  
 The quick SERENA soon perceiv'd her name ;  
 For, as in solemn creeping state she rode,  
 In her lax hand she held fair GREVILLE'S Ode. 150  
 Ne'er did the Muse from her sweet treasure cull  
 Incense so precious for a Power so dull.  
 Still, as she mov'd along her even way,  
 The heavy Goddess try'd to read the lay ;  
 But at each pause her inattentive eye 155  
 Stray'd from the paper, which she held awry ;

Nor



Nor could her lips a single line repeat,  
 Tho' the soft Verse, most ravishingly sweet,  
 Thro' Time's dull ear will lasting pleasure spread,  
 And charm the poppy from Oblivion's head. 160  
 Thus like a City Mayor, whose heavy barge  
 Steers its dull progress at the public charge,  
 This Power, so cumber'd by her empire's weight,  
 Makes her slow circuit round her sluggish state.  
 Around her, tribes of rambling Sceptics crawl, 165  
 Tho' moving, dubious if they move at all.  
 Before her, languid Pomp, her Marshal, creeps,  
 Whose hand her banner half unfolded keeps :  
 Its quaint device her dull dominion spoke—  
 An Eagle, numb'd by the Torpedo's stroke. 170

“ Enough of scenes so foreign to thy soul,”  
 SOPHROSYNE exclaim'd; “ from this dark goal  
 “ Pass we to regions opposite to this.”  
 She spoke; and, darting o'er the wide abyss,  
 Her car, like lightning in soft flashes hurl'd, 175  
 Shot to the confines of a clearer world.

Now lovelier views the Virgin's mind absorb ;  
 For now they hover'd o'er a lucid orb.  
 Here the soft air, luxuriantly warm,  
 Imparts new lustre to SERENA's form : 180  
 Her eyes with more expressive radiance speak,  
 And richer roses open on her cheek.  
 Here, as she gaz'd, she felt in every vein  
 A blended thrill of pleasure and of pain ;  
 Yet every object opening to her view, 185  
 Her quick regard with soft attraction drew.  
 SOPHROSYNE, who saw the gentle Fair  
 Lean o'er these confines with peculiar care,  
 Smil'd at the tender interest she display'd,  
 And spoke regardful of the pensive Maid : 190  
 " Well may'st thou bend o'er this congenial sphere ;  
 " For Sensibility is Sovereign here.  
 " Thou seest her train of sprightly damsels sport,  
 " Where the soft Spirit holds her rural court :  
 " But fix thine eye attentive to the plain, 195  
 " And mark the varying wonders of her reign."

As thus she spoke, she pois'd her airy seat  
 High o'er a plain exhaling every sweet;  
 For round its precincts all the flowers that bloom  
 Fill'd the delicious air with rich perfume; 200  
 And in the midst a verdant throne appear'd,  
 In simplest form by graceful Fancy rear'd,  
 And deck'd with flowers; not such whose flaunting dyes  
 Strike with the strongest tint our dazzled eyes;  
 But those wild herbs that tenderest fibres bear, 205  
 And shun th' approaches of a damper air.  
 Here stood the lovely Ruler of the scene,  
 And Beauty, more than Pomp, announc'd the Queen.  
 The bending Snow-drop, and the Briar-rose,  
 The simple circle of her crown compose; 210  
 Roses of every hue her robe adorn,  
 Except th' insipid Rose without a thorn.  
 Thro' her thin vest her heighten'd beauties shine;  
 For earthly gauze was never half so fine.  
 Of that enchanting age her figure seems, 215  
 When smiling Nature with the vital beams



Of vivid Youth, and Pleasure's purple flame,  
 Gilds her accomplish'd work, the Female frame,  
 With rich luxuriance tender, sweetly wild,  
 And just between the Woman and the Child. 220

Her fair left arm around a vase she flings,  
 From which the tender plant Mimosa springs :  
 Towards its leaves, o'er which she fondly bends,  
 The youthful Fair her vacant hand extends  
 With gentle motion, anxious to survey 225

How far the feeling fibres own her sway :  
 The leaves, as conscious of their Queen's command,  
 Successive fall at her approaching hand ;  
 While her soft breast with pity seems to pant,  
 And shrinks at every shrinking of the plant. 230

Around their Sovereign, on the verdant ground,  
 Sweet airy Forms in mystic measures bound.  
 The mighty master of the revel, Love,  
 In notes more soothing than his mother's Dove,  
 Prompts the soft strain that melting virgins sing, 235  
 Or sportive trips around the frolic ring,

Coupling,

Coupling, with radiant wreaths of lambent fire,

Fair-fluttering Hope and rapturous Desire.

Unnumber'd damsels different charms display,

Pensive with bliss, or in their pleasures gay ; 240

And the wide prospect yields one touching sight

Of tender, yet diversified delight.

But, the bright triumphs of their joy to check,

In the clear air there hangs a dusky speck ;

It swells—it spreads—and rapid, as it grows, 245

O'er the gay scene a chilling shadow throws.

The soft SERENA, who beheld its flight,

Suspects no evil from a cloud so light ;

For harmless round her the thin vapours wreath,

Not hiding from her view the scene beneath ; 250

But ah ! too soon, with Pity's tender pain,

She saw its dire effect o'er all the plain :

Sudden from thence the sounds of Anguish flow,

And Joy's sweet carols end in shrieks of woe :

The wither'd flowers are fall'n, that bloom'd so fair, 255

And poison all the pestilential air.

From

From the rent earth dark Demons force their way,  
 And make the sportive revellers their prey.  
 Here gloomy Terror, with a shadowy rope,  
 Seems, like a Turkish Mute, to strangle Hope ; 260

There jealous Fury drowns in blood the fire  
 That sparkled in the eye of young Desire ;  
 And lifeless Love lets merciless Despair  
 From his crush'd frame his bleeding pinions tear.  
 But pangs more cruel, more intensely keen, 265

Wound and distract their sympathetic Queen :  
 With fruitless tears she o'er their misery bends ;  
 From her sweet brow the thorny Rose she rends,  
 And, bow'd by Grief's insufferable weight,  
 Frantic she curses her immortal state : 270

The soft SERENA, as this curse she hears,  
 Feels her bright eye suffus'd with kindred tears ;  
 And her kind breast, where quick compassion swell'd,  
 Shar'd in each bitter suffering she beheld.

The guardian Power survey'd her lovely grief, 275  
 And spoke in gentle terms of mild relief :

“ For



" For this soft tribe thy heaviest fear dismiss,  
 " And know their pains are transient as their bliss :  
 " Rapture and Agony, in Nature's loom,  
 " Have form'd the changing tissue of their doom; 280  
 " Both interwoven with so nice an art,  
 " No power can tear the twisted threads apart :  
 " Yet happier these, to Nature's heart more dear,  
 " Than the dull offspring in the torpid sphere,  
 " Where her warm wishes, and affections kind, 285  
 " Lose their bright current in the stagnant mind.  
 " Here grief and joy so suddenly unite,  
 " That anguish serves to sublimate delight."  
 She spoke ; and, ere SERENA could reply,  
 The vapour vanish'd from the lucid sky ; 290  
 The Nymphs revive, the shadowy Fiends are fled,  
 The new-born flowers a richer fragrance shed ;  
 The gentle Ruler of the changeful land,  
 Smiling, resum'd her symbol of command ;  
 Replac'd the roses of her regal wreath, 295  
 Still trembling at the thorns that lurk beneath :

But, to her wounded subjects quick to pay  
 The tender duties of imperial sway,  
 Their wants she succour'd, they her wish obey'd,  
 And all recover'd by alternate aid ; 300  
 While, on the lovely Queen's enchanting face,  
 Departed Sorrow's faint and fainter trace,  
 Gave to each touching charm a more attractive grace. }  
 Now, laughing Sport, from the enlighten'd plain,  
 Clear'd with quick foot the vestiges of Pain ; 305  
 The gay scene grows more beautifully bright,  
 Than when it first allur'd SERENA's sight.  
 Still her fond eyes o'er all the prospect range,  
 Flashing sweet pleasure at the blissful change :  
 Her curious thoughts with fond attachment burn, 310  
 Yet more of this engaging land to learn.  
 She finds the chief attendants of the Queen,  
 Sweet Females, wafted from our human scene ;  
 But, as it chanc'd, while all the realm reviv'd,  
 A Spirit masculine from earth arriv'd : 315

Two airy guides conduct the gentle Shade ;  
 Genius, in robes of braided flames array'd,  
 And a fantastic Nymph, in manners nice,  
 Profusely deck'd with many an odd device ;  
 Sister of him, whose luminous attire 320  
 Flashes with unextinguishable fire ;  
 Like him in features, in her look as wild,  
 And Singularity by mortals styl'd.  
 The eager Queen, and all her smiling Court,  
 Surround the welcome Shade in gentle sport ; 325  
 For in their new associate all rejoice,  
 All pant to hear the accents of his voice.  
 Tho' o'er his frame th' Armenian robe was flung,  
 The pleasing Stranger spoke the Gallic tongue ;  
 But in that language his enchanting art 330  
 Inspir'd new energy, that seiz'd the heart ;  
 In terms so eloquent, so sweetly bold,  
 A story of disastrous love he told,

R

Convuls'd



Convuls'd with sympathy, the list'ning train,  
 At every pause, with dear delicious pain, 335 }  
 Intreat him to renew the fascinating strain.  
 And now SERENA, with suspended breath,  
 Listen'd, and caught the tale of JULIA's death ;  
 And quick she cries, ere tears had time to flow,  
 " Blest be this hour ! for now I see ROUSSEAU." 340  
 Fondly she gaz'd, till the enchanting sound  
 In such a potent spell her spirit bound,  
 That, lost in sweet illusion, she forgot  
 The promis'd scenes of the sublimer spot ;  
 Till now her mild Remembrancer, whose care 345  
 Stray'd not a moment from the mortal Fair,  
 Rous'd her rapt mind, preparing her to meet  
 The brighter wonders of her blissful feat ;  
 While her instinctive car's obedient frame  
 Now upward rose, like undulating flame. 350

As when some victor on the watery world,  
 Bright honour gilding all his sails unfurl'd;

Steers into port, while to the laughing sky  
 His streamers tell his triumph as they fly ;  
 Expecting thousands line the crowded strand,      355  
 Swell the glad voice, or wave the joyous hand,  
 Pressing to view the sight their vows implor'd,  
 And hail their glory and their strength restor'd :  
 So the blest Beings of this smiling scene  
 Flock'd round the car of their returning Queen.      360  
 The radiant car, from which they now alight,  
 Careful she gives to a selected Sprite,  
 A Nymph of snowy vest and lovely frame,  
 Fidelity her fair and spotless name ;  
 Then, happy to review her hallow'd home,      365  
 Leads her sweet Guest to her celestial dome.

Gentlest of Powers ! for every purpose fit,  
 To strengthen Wisdom, and embellish Wit ;—  
 Thou whose soft arts, possess'd by thee alone,  
 Can give to Virtue's voice a sweeter tone ;      370  
 Allay the frost of Age, or fire of Youth,  
 And lend attraction to severest Truth ;

Improve e'en Beauty by thy graceful ease,  
 Or teach Deformity herself to please ;—  
 Inspire the Bard, whose just ambition pants 375  
 To guide weak mortals to thy heavenly haunts !  
 Grant him, in notes that, like thy soft controul,  
 Allure attention, and possess the soul ;  
 Grant him to shew, in luminous display,  
 The mystic wonders of thy secret sway ! 380  
 ' Now, at the sight of the presiding Power,  
 Wide spread the gates of a stupendous tower,  
 On whose firm height, commanding Nature's bound,  
 The faithful warder of the fort they found  
 Wakeful Intelligence, a trusty Sprite, 385  
 Whose eyes are piercing as the solar light,  
 And ever on the watch to sound alarm,  
 If aught of dusky hue, portending harm,  
 Should, in defiance of her mandate, dare  
 Approach the palace of th' imperial Fair. 390  
 Within his ward, magnificently great,  
 Lies the rich armoury that guards her state.



Here stands Conviction's strong and lucid spear,  
 Whose touch annihilates Suspense and Fear ;  
 Here, Truth's unsullied adamantine shield, 395  
 Which, save SOPHROSUNE, no Power can wield ;  
 And Reason's trenchant blade of blazing steel,  
 Its edge and polish form'd by friendly Zeal ;  
 And, not less sure, their destin'd mark to hit,  
 Pointed by Virtue's hand, the shafts of Wit ; 400  
 And Ridicule's strong bolt, whose stunning blow  
 Lays towering Vice and fearless Folly low.  
 Here too the Goddess kept, in mystic state,  
 Those sweet rewards that on her champions wait,  
 Guerdons more precious than triumphant palms :— 405  
 The glance of Gratitude for mental alms,  
 Peace's soft kiss, and Reconcilement's tear,  
 And smiles of Sympathy, are treasur'd here.

These precincts past, now hand in hand they came  
 To the rich fabric of majestic frame ; 410  
 Instant with joy their Sovereign to behold,  
 The gates of massive adamant unfold ;

And,

And, as the gently-moving valves unclofe,  
 Myfterious mufic from their motion flows ;  
 The airy notes thro' all the palace roam, 415  
 And dulcet echoes fill the feftive dome :  
 A gorgeous hall amaz'd SERENA'S eyes,  
 Compar'd to which, in fplendor, ftrength, and fize,  
 The nobleft works of which Tradition fings,  
 Judaic fhrine, or feat of Memphian kings, 420  
 Would feem more humble than the waxen cell  
 In which the fkilful Bee is proud to dwell.  
 Here fits a Power, in whole angelic face  
 Beauty is fweeten'd by maternal grace ;  
 Her radiant feat, furpaffing mortal art, 425  
 Supports an emblem of her liberal heart,  
 A Pelican, who rears her callow brood,  
 And from her vitals feems to draw their food.  
 Around this Spirit flock a filial hoft,  
 Who blefs her empire, and her guidance boaft. 430  
 Here every Science, all the Arts attend,  
 In her they hail their parent and their friend ;

Each to her presence brings the happy few,  
 Whose dearest glory from her favour grew.  
 Here, in her simple charms, with youthful fire, 435  
 Proud to display the magic of her lyre,  
 Soul-soothing Harmony presents her band :  
 Beside her Orpheus and Amphion stand.  
 Here, mild Philosophy, whose thoughtful frown  
 Is sweetly shaded by her olive crown, 440  
 (In all her attic elegance array'd,  
 Strong to convince, and gentle to persuade)  
 To her, whose breath inspir'd his every rule,  
 Leads the blest Sire of the Socratic school.  
 Each animating Bard and moral Sage, 445  
 The heaven-taught minds of every clime and age,  
 Who soften'd manners, and refin'd the soul,  
 Flock to this presence, as to Glory's goal ;  
 And, as the mother's heart, that yearns to bless  
 The rival innocents that round her press, 450  
 Delights to see them, as her love they share,  
 Sport in her sight, and flourish by her care ;

Fondly



Fondly responsive to their every call,  
Tender of each, and provident for all:

So this sweet Image of Celestial Grace, 455

Who sits encircled by her lovely race,

To every Science vital strength imparts,

And rears the circle of the Social Arts;

With such sollicitude she gives to each,

Pow'rs of sublimer aim and wider reach. 460

And now SOPHROSYNE, who near her prest,

Thus spoke her title to her earthly guest:—

“ Behold the honour'd Form, without whose aid

“ My strength must vanish, and my glory fade!

“ Source of my being, and my life's support! 465\

“ EUNOIA call'd in this celestial Court,

“ BENEVOLENCE the name she bears on earth,

“ The guard of Weakness, and the friend of Worth.”

She ended: and the mild maternal Form

Embrac'd SERENA with a smile as warm 470

As the gay spirit Vegetation wears,

When she to crown her favourite Nymph prepares,

When,

When, pleas'd her flowery treasures to display,  
She pours them in the lap of youthful May.

But how, SERENA ! how may human speech      475  
Thy heavenly raptures in this moment reach ?  
If aught of earthly sentiment may vie  
With the pure joy these happy scenes supply,  
'Tis when, unmixt with trouble and with pain,  
Love glides in secret thro' the glowing vein ;      480  
When some fond Youth, unconscious of its fire,  
Free from chill Fear and turbulent Desire,  
With every thought absorb'd in soft delight,  
Sees all creation in his Fair one's sight,  
And feels a blissful state without a name,      485  
Repose of soul with harmony of frame.  
So, plung'd in pleasure of the purest kind,  
SERENA gaz'd on the maternal Mind ;  
Gaz'd till SOPHROSYNE's directing aid  
Thus summon'd to new fights th' obedient Maid :— 490  
“ Haste, my fair Charge, for of this ample state,  
“ Tracts yet unseen thy visitation wait.

" The pressing hours forbid me to unfold  
 " Each separate province which these confines hold ;  
 " But I will lead thee to that blisful crew, 495  
 " Whose kindred spirits best deserve thy view."

So speaking, her attentive Guest she led  
 Thro' scenes, that still increasing wonder bred.  
 Where'er she trod, thro' all her gorgeous feat,  
 Soft music echoed from beneath her feet : 500  
 Passing a portal, on whose lucid stone  
 Emblems of Innocence and Beauty shone,  
 They reach a lawn with verdant lustre bright,  
 And view the bowers of permanent delight.  
 No fiery Sun here forms a scorching noon, 505  
 No baleful Meteor gleams, no chilling Moon :  
 But, from a latent source, one soothing light,  
 Whose constant rays repel the mist of night,  
 Tho' tender, chearful, and tho' warm, serene,  
 Gives lasting beauty to the lovely scene. 510  
 No sensual thought this paradise profanes ;  
 For here tried Excellence in triumph reigns,

Benignant



Benignant cares eternal joy supply,  
And blifs angelic beams in every eye.

“In yon’ three groups,” the leading Spirit cried, 515  
“My fav’rite Females see, my fairest pride.  
“The first in rank is that distinguish’d train,  
“Whose strength of soul was tried by Hymen’s chain :  
“Tho’ Beauty blest their form, and Love their guide,  
“Their nuptial band with happiest omens tied, 520  
“Beauty and Love, they felt, may lose the art  
“To fix inconstant Man’s eccentric heart ;  
“Yet, conscious of their Lord’s neglected vow,  
“No Virtue frown’d outrageous on their brow,  
“To keep returning Tendernefs aloof, 525  
“By coarse upbraiding, and despis’d reproof :  
“With Sorrow smother’d in Attraction’s smile,  
“They strove the sense of misery to beguile ;  
“And, from wild Passion’s perilous abyss,  
“Lure the lost wanderer back to faithful blifs. 530  
“See mild OCTAVIA o’er this band preside,  
“Voluptuous ANTONY’s neglected bride,

“ Whose feeling heart, with all a Mother’s care,  
 “ Rear’d the young offspring of a rival Fair.  
 “ Far other trials rais’d yon lovely crew, 535  
 “ Tho’ in connubial scenes their merit grew :  
 “ It was their chance, ere judgment was mature,  
 “ When glittering toys the infant mind allure,  
 “ Following their parents’ avaricious rule,  
 “ To wed, with hopes of bliss, a wealthy fool. 540  
 “ When Time remov’d Delusion’s veil by stealth,  
 “ And shew’d the drear vacuity of wealth ;  
 “ When sad Experience prov’d the bitter fate  
 “ Of Beauty coupled to a senseless Mate,  
 “ These gentle Wives still gloried to submit ; 545  
 “ These, tho’ invited by alluring Wit,  
 “ Refus’d in paths of lawless joy to range,  
 “ Nor murmur’d at the lot they could not change :  
 “ But, with a lively sweetness, unoppress’d  
 “ By a dull Husband’s lamentable jest, 550  
 “ Their constant rays of gay good-humour spread  
 “ A guardian glory round their idiot’s head.

“ The

" The next in order are those lovely Forms,  
 " Whose patience weather'd all paternal storms ;  
 " By filial cares, the mind's unfailing test, 555  
 " Well have they earn'd these seats of blissful rest :  
 " They, unrepining at severe restraint,  
 " Peevish commands, and undeserv'd complaint ;  
 " Bent with unwearied kindness to appease  
 " Each fancied want of querulous Disease ; 560  
 " Gave up those joys which youthful hearts engage,  
 " To watch the weakness of parental age.  
 " Such are these gentle tribes, the happy few  
 " Who share the triumph to their victory due :  
 " Angelic aims their spotless minds employ, 565  
 " And fill their measure of unchequer'd joy.  
 " Behold'! where some with generous ardor wait  
 " Around yon Seer, who holds the book of Fate ;  
 " Those awful leaves with eager glance they turn,  
 " Thence with celestial zeal they fondly learn 570  
 " What dangers threaten, thro' the vale of earth,  
 " Their kindred pilgrims, ere they rise to birth :

" To



- " To earth they still invisibly descend,  
 " In that dark scene congenial minds defend,  
 " From Pleasure's Bud drive Spleen's corroding worm,  
 " And in my votaries' heart my power confirm. 576  
 " Delights more calm yon listening band employ,  
 " Who deeply drink of intellectual joy.  
 " See them around that speaking Nymph rejoice,  
 " Their pleasures varying with her varied voice ! 580  
 " What graces in the sweet enthusiast glow !  
 " Repeating here whate'er she learns below.  
 " Memory her name, her charge o'er earth to flit,  
 " And cull the fairest flowers of human wit.  
 " Whatever Genius, in his happiest hour, 585  
 " Has penn'd, of moral grace and comic power,  
 " To warm the heart, the spells of Spleen unbind,  
 " And pour gay sunshine o'er the misty mind ;  
 " Teach men to cherish their fraternal tie,  
 " And view kind Nature with a filial eye ; 590  
 " This active Spirit catches in her flight,  
 " Skill'd to retain, and happy to recite.

“ Here she delivers each bright work, and each

“ Derives new beauty from her graceful speech.

“ Warpt by no envy, by no love misled, 595

“ Equal she holds the living and the dead ;

“ Alike rehearsing, as they claim their turn,

“ The song of ANSTEY, and the tale of STERNE.

“ But Morning calls thee hence.—Yet one scene more,

“ My fostering love shall lead thee to explore. 600

“ This, thy last sight, with careful eyes survey,

“ And mark th’ extensive nature of my sway.”

Thus with fond zeal the guardian Spirit said,

And to new precincts of her palace led ;

The scene she enter’d of her richest state, 605

Where on her voice the subject Passions wait :

Here rose a throne of living gems, so bright

No breath could fully their benignant light ;

This, her immortal seat, the gracious Guide

Assum’d : her Ward stood wondering at her side. 610

Swift as they felt their ruling Power inthron’d,

Ætherial Beings, who her empire own’d,

Crowded

Crowded in glittering pomp the gorgeous scene,  
To pay their homage to their heavenly Queen.

First came chaste Love, whose sweet harmonious form  
Ne'er felt Suspicion's foul-convulsing storm ; 616

No baleful arrow in his quiver lies,  
No blinding veil enwraps his sparkling eyes ;  
There all the rays of varied joy unite,  
And jointly shed unspeakable delight. 620

With him was Friendship, like a virgin drest,  
The soft Asbestos form'd her simple vest,  
Whose wond'rous folds, in fiercest flames entire,  
Mock the vain ravage of consuming fire :

Around this robe, a mystic chain she wore, 625

Each golden link a star of diamonds bore ;  
Force could not tear the finish'd work apart,  
Nor Int'rest loose it by his subtlest art :

But, strange to tell, if the presiding Power,  
Who to her Favourite gave this precious dower, 630

If kind SOPHROSYNE could fail to breathe  
Her vital virtue on this magic wreath,

The



The parts must sever, faithless to their trust,  
 The gold grow dross, and every diamond dust.  
 These Valour follow'd, deck'd with verdant palm, 635  
 Gracefully bold, majestically calm.

A mingled troop succeed, with festive sound,  
 Wisdom with olive, Wit with feathers crown'd ;  
 Here, hand in hand they move, no longer foes,  
 Their charms encreasing as their union grows ; 640  
 Pure Spirits all, who hating mental strife,  
 Exalt creation, and embellish life ;  
 All here attend, and, in their Sovereign's praise,  
 Their circling forms the song of glory raise.

The blest SERENA drinks, with ravish'd ear, 645  
 The melting music of the tuneful sphere.  
 Now in its close the soothing echoes roll  
 O'er her rapt fancy, and intrance her soul ;  
 Her senses sink in soft Oblivion's bands,  
 Till faithful Jenny at her pillow stands, 650

Recalls each mental and corporeal power,  
 While she proclaims aloud the passing hour ;  
 And, in a voice expressive of surprize,  
 Too shrill to seem the music of the skies,  
 Informs the startled Fair 'tis time to rise.

655 }

END OF THE FIFTH CANTO.

CANTO

## C A N T O VI.

**B** L E S T be the heart of sympathetic mould,  
 Whatever form that gentle heart infold,  
 Whose generous fibres with fond terror shake,  
 When keen Affliction threatens to o'ertake  
 Young artless Beauty, as alarm'd she strays, 5  
 Thro' the strange windings of this mortal maze !  
 To such, SERENA, be thy story known,  
 Whose bosom best can make thy lot their own,  
 And, kindly sharing in thy trials past,  
 Attend with sweet anxiety the last. 10  
 The hour approaches, the tremendous hour,  
 In whose dark moments deeper perils lower ;  
 Still so enwrapt in Pleasure's gay disguise,  
 They lurk invisible to Caution's eyes ;  
 And, unsuspected by the Fair one, wait 15  
 To cancel or confirm her blissful fate.



Her lively mind with bright ideas stor'd,  
 She takes her station at the Breakfast-board;  
 Still her soft soul the heavenly Vision fills,  
 And sweeter graces in her smile instills ; 20  
 New hopes of triumph glide thro' every nerve,  
 And arm her glowing heart with firm reserve ;  
 Conscious the final trying chance impends,  
 To bear its force her every power she bends ;  
 In her quick thought ambitious to presage 25  
 How Spleen's dark agents may exert their rage,  
 She ponders on what perils may befall;  
 And fondly deems her mind a match for all.  
 Ah, lovely Nymph ! this dangerous pride forego ;  
 Pride may betray—Security's thy foe. 30

While fancied Prudence thus, a foreign guest,  
 Sits doubly cherish'd in SERENA's breast,  
 Behold a billet her attention steal,  
 No common arms compose its ample seal ;  
 Th' unfolding paper breathes a roseate scent, 35  
 Sweet harbinger of joy, its kind intent.

Of courteous FILLIGREE it bears the name,  
 Clear symptom of the Peer's increasing flame !  
 The gracious Earl, lamenting pleasure lost,  
 And fair SERENA in her wishes crost, 40  
 Has plann'd, in honour of the lovely Maid,  
 A fancied Ball, a private Masquerade,  
 And supplicates her Sire, with warm esteem,  
 To smile indulgent on the festive scheme.  
 All arts he uses to insure the grant, 45  
 Nor leaves unask'd the eager maiden Aunt.  
 Quick at the sound SERENA's glowing heart  
 Throbs with gay hopes ; but soon those hopes depart :  
 Reflection, in her soul a faithful guard,  
 The opening avenues of pleasure barr'd : 50  
 She deem'd the plan of this delightful shew,  
 But the new ambush of her secret foe ;  
 The bliss too bright to realize, she gues'd,  
 And chas'd th' idea from her guarded breast.  
 While these discreet resolves her thought employ, 55  
 Tranquil she triumphs o'er her smother'd joy.

Not so the Knight—to his parental eyes,  
 In dazzling pomp delusive visions rise :  
 That Coronet, the object of his vow,  
 He sees suspended o'er his daughter's brow ; 60  
 Eager he burns to snap the pendent thread,  
 And fix the glory on his Darling's head.  
 Far wiser aims the ancient Maiden caught,  
 No empty gew-gaw flutters in her thought ;  
 But, while more keenly she applauds the plan, 65  
 Her hope is solid and substantial Man ;  
 Not for her infant Niece, whose baby frame  
 She holds unfit for Hymen's holy flame ;  
 But for her riper self, whose strength may bear  
 The heaviest burden of connubial care. 70

Tho' different Phantoms dance before their fight,  
 Niece, Aunt, and Father, in one wish unite,  
 To join the banquet is their common choice,  
 The business past with no dissenting voice ;  
 And the warm Sire, in whom ambition burn'd, 75  
 A note of grateful courtesy return'd :



His billet seal'd, the glad good-humour'd Knight  
Launch'd forth, like Nestor, on his youthful might :—

“ O could I now, in spite of age, retain

“ That active vigour, and that sprightly vein, 80

“ Which led me once the lively laugh to raise

“ Among the merrier Wits of former days,

“ When rival Beauties would around me throng,

“ And gay Ridottos listen to my song !

“ Such were I now, as on the festive night, 85

“ When Ch——h's charms amaz'd the public fight ;

“ When the kind Fair one, in a veil so thin

“ That the clear gauze was but a lighter skin,

“ Mask'd like a Virgin just prepar'd to die,

“ Gave her plump beauties to each greedy eye ! 90

“ On that fam'd night, (for then with frolic fire

“ Youth fill'd my heart, and Humour strung my lyre)

“ Pleas'd in the sunshine of her smile to bask,

“ I danc'd around her in a Devil's mask ;

“ And idly chaunted an infernal ode, 95

“ In praise of all this Female tempter shew'd.

“ The

" The jocund crowd, who throng'd with me to gaze,  
 " Extoll'd my unpremeditated lays,  
 " And Sport, who still of this old revel brags,  
 " \* Styl'd her the first of Maids, and me of Wags. 100  
 " Then a light Devil, now, reduc'd to limp,  
 " I am but fit to play the hag-born Imp ;  
 " Still, not to cross the frolic of this Ball,  
 " Still as the Tortoise Caliban I'll crawl,  
 " And if with Gout my burning ankles flinch, 105  
 " I'll call it Prospero's tormenting pinch ;  
 " Still in this shape I'll shew them what I am,  
 " And PEN. shall go as Sycorax, my dam."

So spoke the Knight ; and spoke with so much weight,  
 The listening Females saw his word was fate ; 110  
 For ne'er did Jove with so resolv'd a brow  
 To smiling Love his joyous scheme avow,  
 When he concertèd, for his special mirth,  
 A masquerading on the stage of earth,

\* ΘΕΩΝ ΔΙΙ, ΝΕΣΤΟΡΙ Τ' ΑΝΔΡΩΝ.

See Nestor's Speech in the 11th Iliad.

And of the Swan's soft plume, or Bull's rough hair, 115

Order'd the Fancy-dress he chose to wear.

From whence let sapient Antiquarians shew

The ancient use of Masquerades below.

SERENA smil'd to see this joyous fire

Infuse new youth in her determin'd Sire ; 120

But mute PENELOPE, with half a sigh,

" With one auspicious and one dropping eye,"

Heard the firm Knight his fixt resolve impart,

Tickling at once and torturing her heart.

The Ball she relish'd, but abhorr'd the task 125

To hide her beauties in a Beldam's mask :

Miranda's name would better suit her plan,

A simple Maiden, not afraid of Man ;

But us'd, alas ! her Brother's law to feel,

She knows that law admits not of repeal. 130

Trusting her charms will any garb enrich,

She deigns to take the habit of a Witch.

Never did Sorcerers in the shades of night

Try to illuminate a filthy Sprite



With fonder efforts, or with worse success, 135  
 Than PEN. now labour'd, in this wayward dress,  
 To give the sprightly shew of living truth  
 To the poor ghost of her departed youth.  
 As Witches o'er their magic cauldron bend,  
 Anxious to see their menial Imps ascend ; 140  
 So in her glass the ancient Maiden pries,  
 And dreams new graces in her person rise.  
 No such delights, whose dear delusions please,  
 The mild SERENA in her mirror sees ;  
 She, at whose toilet Beauty's latent Queen 145  
 Attends, enchanted with her filial mien,  
 And o'er her Favourite's unconscious face  
 Breathes her own roseate glow and vivid grace.  
 She hastes her glittering garments to adjust,  
 With all the modest charms of sweet distrust, 150  
 Doubting that beauty, which she doubts alone,  
 Which dazzles every eye except her own.  
 The native diffidence which sway'd her mind,  
 Now feels new terrors with its own combin'd ;

The

The robes of Ariel to the Nymph recall 155

Those disappointments that may yet befall ;

As her fair hands the gauze or tissue touch,

They fondly warn her not to hope too much.

She feels the friendly counsel they impart,

And Caution reigns protector of her heart. 160

'The fateful evening comes—the coach attends,

And first the gouty Caliban ascends ;

Then, in Deformity's well-fitted pride,

Sour Sycorax is station'd by his side ;

And last, with sportive smiles, divinely sweet, 165

Light Ariel perches on the vacant feat.

Fancy now paints the scene of pleasure near,

Yet fluttering Gaiety is check'd by Fear.

Her wish to view the festive fight runs high ;

But the fond Nymph remembers, with a sigh, 170

From Hope's keen hand the cup of joy may slip,

And fall untasted, tho' it reach the lip.

As the fine Artist, whose nice toils aspire

To fame eternal by encaustic fire ;

If he, with grief, has seen the faithless heat 175  
 Marr the rich labour it should make compleat,  
 When next his hands, with trembling care, confide  
 To the fierce element his pencil's pride,  
 Watches unceasing the pernicious flame,  
 Terror and Hope contending in his frame, 180  
 While his fair work the dangerous fire sustains,  
 Feels it in all his sympathetic veins,  
 And at each trivial sound that Chance may cause,  
 Hears the Gem crack, and sees its cruel flaws :  
 With such solicitude the panting Maid 185  
 Past the long street, of every noise afraid.  
 Now, while around her rival flambeaus flare,  
 And the coach rattles thro' the crowded square,  
 She fears some dire mischance must yet befall,  
 Some Demon snatch her from the promis'd Ball ; 190  
 And dreams no trial more severe than this,  
 So bright she figures the new scene of bliss :  
 Yet, horrid as it seems, her heart is bent,  
 To bear e'en this, and bear it with content.

But,



But, whirl'd at length within the Porter's gate, 195  
 She thinks what perils at the Ball may wait ;  
 And, as she now alights, the fluttering Fair  
 Invokes her Guardian to protect her there,  
 Till thoughts of danger, thoughts of caution, fly  
 Before the magic blaze that meets her eye. 200  
 Th' advancing Nymph, at every step she takes,  
 Pants with amazement, doubtful if she wakes ;  
 Far as her eyes the glittering scene command,  
 'Tis all enchantment, all a Fairy land ;  
 No vestiges of modern pomp appear, 205  
 No modern melody salutes her ear :  
 With Moorish notes the echoing mansion rings,  
 And its transmuted form to Fancy brings  
 The rich \* Alhambra of the Moorish kings. }  
 The Peer, who keenly thirsts for Fashion's praise, 210  
 To gild his revel with no common rays,  
 Summon'd his modish Architect, whose skill  
 Can all the wishes of Caprice fulfil.

\* See the Views of this Palace in Swinburn's Travels.

His genius, equal to the wildest task,  
Gave to the house itself a Gothic mask. 215

The Chaplain, that no guest might feel neglect,  
As a Magician of the Arab sect,  
Wav'd a presiding wand throughout the Ball,  
And well provided for the wants of all.

The Peer himself, his prowess to evince, 220  
Shines in the semblance of a Moorish Prince ;  
And round the brilliant mimic Hero wait  
All pomp and circumstance of Moorish state :  
Thro' all his splendid dome no eye could find  
Aught unembellish'd, save the Master's mind. 225

There, tho' repress'd by Courtesy's controul,  
Lurks the low rover of the little soul,  
Mean Vanity ; whose slave can never prove  
The heart-refining flame of genuine love.  
While her cold joys his abject mind amuse, 230  
His thoughts are busied on connubial views.

His house compleat, its decorations plac'd  
By the sure hand of fashionable Taste,

He

He only wants, to crown his modish life,  
That last and finest moveable—a Wife. 235

She too must prove, to fix his coy desire,  
Such as the eye of Fashion will admire.

His Ball is but a jury, to decide  
Upon the merit of his fancied Bride.

If sweet SERENA, on this signal night, 240

Shines the first idol of the public sight ;

If Gallantry's fixt eyes pronounce her fair,

By the sure sign of one unceasing stare ;

And if, prophetic of her nobler doom,

Each rival Beauty shudders at her bloom ; 245

The die is cast—he weds—the point is clear ;

She cannot flight the vows of such a Peer.

Thus argued in his mind the festive Earl,

And, lest he lightly chuse an awkward Girl,

Wisely conven'd, on this important case, 250

Each fashionable judge of Female grace.

Here Beaux Esprits in various figures lurk,

Of Jew and Gentile, Bramin, Tartar, Turk ;



But of the manly Masks, a youthful Bard  
 Seem'd most to challenge Beauty's soft regard : 255  
 Adorn'd with native elegance, he wore,  
 In simplest form, the minstrel dress of yore :  
 They call him EDWIN, who around him throng,  
 EDWIN, immortaliz'd in BEATTIE's song ;  
 And, sooth to say, within a comely frame, 260  
 He bore a heart that answer'd to the name ;  
 For this neat habit deck'd a generous Youth,  
 Of gentlest manners, and sincerest truth.  
 Tho' on his birth propitious Fortune smil'd,  
 No proud parental folly spoil'd the Child ; 265  
 And Genius, more beneficently kind,  
 Blest with superior wealth his manly mind.  
 Of years he barely counted twenty-one ;  
 But, like a brilliant morn, his opening life begun.  
 Fain would the Muse on this her votary dwell, 270  
 And fully paint the Youth she loves so well ;  
 His figure's charms, the music of his tongue,  
 What Nymphs his lays allur'd, what lays he sung :

But

But higher cares her rambling song controul ;

SERENA's perils summon all her soul ;

275

For Spleen, ambitious to exert her force,

Conscious this trial is her last resource,

Most keenly bent on her pernicious task,

Has shifted round the Ball from mask to mask,

Watching the moment, with infernal care,

280 }

To form with deepest art her final snare,

And manacle the mind, of the unguarded Fair.

}

It comes, the moment that must fix her lot,

By her, ah thoughtless Maid ! by her forgot ;

Tho' the light Hours, e'en in their frolic ring,

285

Trembling perceive the fearful chance they bring,

And, shuddering at the Nymph's terrific state,

Seem anxious to suspend her doubtful fate.

Now social Ease the place of Sport supplied,

The hot oppressive mask was thrown aside,

290 }

And Beauty shone reveal'd in all her blushing pride.

}

Superior still in features as in form,

With admiration flush'd, with pleasure warm,

The gay SERENA every eye allur'd ;  
 The hearts her figure won her face secur'd : 295  
 A tender sweetness still the Nymph maintain'd,  
 And Modesty o'er all her graces reign'd.  
 Well might her soul to brilliant hopes incline,  
 A thousand Youths had call'd her charms divine ;  
 A thousand friends had whisper'd in her ear, 300  
 That Fate had mark'd her for the festive Peer.  
 Her youthful fancy, tho' by pomp amus'd,  
 With'd not those offers, which her heart refus'd :  
 That tender heart, by no vain pride possess'd,  
 With indecisive trembling shook her breast, 305  
 Like a young bird, that, fluttering in the air,  
 Wishes to build her nest, yet knows not where.

The busy Earl, his puny love to raise,  
 Hunted the circling whisper of her praise ;  
 Heard Envy own her lovely charms, tho' loth, 310  
 Heard Taste attest them with a modish oath ;  
 And, nuptial projects thickening in his mind,  
 Now his fair partner in the dance rejoin'd.



As now the sprightly music paus'd, my Lord  
 Eager resolv'd to touch a softer chord ; 315  
 Secure of all repulse, he vainly meant  
 Half to display, half hide his fond intent,  
 And, in dissembled Passion's flowery tropes,  
 To sport at leisure with the Virgin's hopes :  
 For this he fram'd a motley speech, replete 320  
 With amorous compliment and vain conceit.  
 The labour'd nothing with complacent pride  
 He spoke ; but to his speech no Nymph replied :  
 For in the moment, the lost Fair devotes  
 Her willing ear to more attractive notes. 325  
 The Minstrel happen'd near the Nymph to walk,  
 Rapt with a bosom-friend in secret talk,  
 And, at the instant when the Earl began  
 Half to unfold his matrimonial plan,  
 EDWIN, in whispers, from the crowd retir'd, 330  
 Chanc'd to repeat the Sonnet she inspir'd :  
 The sounds, tho' faint, her recollection caught,  
 Drew her quick eye, and fixt her wondering thought.

Loft in this sweet furprize, ſhe could not hear  
A ſingle accent of the amorous Peer. 335

Spleen ſaw the moment that ſhe fought to gain,  
And perch'd triumphant on the Noble's brain.

With jealous Envy ſtung, and baffled Pride,  
“ Contemptuous Girl !” with ſudden rage he cried,

“ If here to happier Youths thy views incline, 340

“ I want not fairer Nymphs who challenge mine.

“ Thy breaſt in vain with penitence may burn ;

“ But, once neglected, I no more return.”

Thus loudly ſpeaking, with diſtemper'd heat,  
Rudely he turn'd, with rancorous ſcorn replete. 345

SERENA, ſtartled at th' injurious ſound,

Survey'd th' insulting Peer, who ſternly frown'd ;

Shame and reſentment thro' her boſom ruſh,

Swell every vein, and raiſe the burning bluſh.

Love, new-born Love, but in its birth conceal'd, 350

Nor to the Nymph herſelf as yet reveal'd,

And juſt Diſdain, and Anger's honeſt flame,

With complicated power convulſe her frame :

Contending passions every thought confound,  
 And in tumultuous doubt her soul is drown'd. 355  
 Now treacherous Pride, who tempts her tongue to trip,  
 Forms to a keen reply her quivering lip :  
 Infidious Spleen now hovers o'er the Fair,  
 Deems her half lock'd within her hateful snare ;  
 In her new slave preparing to rejoice, 360  
 To taint her spirit, and untune her voice.  
 Hapless SERENA ! what can save thee now ?  
 The Fiend's dark signet stamps thy clouded brow,  
 In thy swoln eye I see the starting drop ;  
 This fatal shower, ætherial Guardian ! stop : 365  
 Hasten to thy votary, haste, her soul sustain,  
 Nor let the trials she has past be vain.  
 Ah me ! while yet I speak, with shuddering dread  
 I hear the magic Girdle's bursting thread.  
 This horrid omen, ye kind Powers ! avert : 370  
 Nor thou, bright Zone ! thy brighter Charge desert.  
 Ah, fruitless prayer ! her panting breast behold !  
 See ! the gauze shakes in many a ruffled fold !

Forc'd



Forc'd from their station by her heaving heart,  
 From the strain'd Girdle thrice three spangles start : 375  
 Thro' her disorder'd dress a pass they've found,  
 And fallen, see, they glitter on the ground !  
 O blessed chance ! with life-recalling light  
 The glittering monitors attract her sight !  
 Like stars emerging from the darken'd pole, 380  
 They sparkle safety to her harrafs'd soul.  
 See ! from her brow the clouds of trouble fly,  
 Vexation's tear is vanish'd from her eye !  
 Her rosy cheeks with Joy's soft radiance burn,  
 Like Nature smiling at the Sun's return ; 385  
 The Nymph, no more with mental darkness blind,  
 Shines the sweet Ruler of her rescu'd mind.  
 Hence, hateful Spleen ! thy fancied prize resign,  
 Renounce for ever what shall ne'er be thine ;  
 For, conscious of her airy Guardian's aid, 390  
 She feels new spirit thro' her heart convey'd,  
 And, inly blessing this victorious hour,  
 Her soul exults in its recover'd power.

In such mild terms she hails th' insulting Peer,  
 As Spleen, if mortal, must expire to hear ; 395  
 But, driven for ever from the lovely Girl,  
 The foul Fiend riots in the captive Earl.  
 He answers not ; but, with a fullen air,  
 On happier EDWIN, who approach'd the Fair,  
 Darts such a glance of rage and envious hate, 400  
 As Satan cast on Eden's blissful state,  
 When on our Parents first he fixt his sight,  
 And undelighted gaz'd on all delight :  
 So doom'd to look, and doom'd such pangs to feel,  
 Scornful he turn'd on his elastic heel. 405

" O lovely Mildness ! oh angelic Maid !  
 " Deserving homage, tho' to scorn betray'd ;  
 " Rise still, sweet Spirit, rise these wrongs above,  
 " Turn from injurious Pride to faithful Love ;  
 " Tho' on my brow no Coronet may shine, 410  
 " Wealth I can offer at thy beauty's shrine,  
 " And, worthier thee, a heart that worships thine." }

Thus,

Thus, with new-kindled Love's aspiring flame,  
 Spoke the fond Youth conceal'd by EDWIN's name,  
 The gallant FALKLAND, rich in inborn worth, 415  
 By Fortune blest, and not of abject birth.  
 Warmly he spoke, with that indignant heat  
 With which the generous heart ne'er fails to beat,  
 When Worth insulted wakens virtuous ire,  
 And injur'd Beauty sets the soul on fire. 420  
 Quick to his voice the startled Virgin turn'd,  
 With wonder, hope, and joy, her bosom burn'd ;  
 With sweet confusion, flurried and amaz'd,  
 On his attractive form she wildly gaz'd.  
 Full on her thought the friendly visions rush'd ; 425  
 Blushing she view'd him, view'd him still and blush'd ;  
 And, soft Affection quickening at the sight,  
 Perchance had swoon'd with fullness of delight,  
 But that her Father's voice, with quick controul,  
 Recall'd the functions of her fainting soul, 430  
 When on the distant seat, where, fondly fixt,  
 He view'd the Nymph as in the dance she mixt,

He



He indistinctly heard, with wounded ear,  
 The spleenful outrage of the angry Peer.  
 Swift at th' imperfect sound, with choler wild, 435  
 He sprung to succour his insulted Child ;  
 But ere his fury into language broke,  
 Love calm'd the storm that Arrogance awoke.  
 The sudden burst of FALKLAND's tender flame,  
 His winning manners, his distinguish'd name, 440  
 His liberal soul, by Fortune's smile carest,  
 All join'd to harmonize the Father's breast.  
 His fiery thoughts subside in glad surprize,  
 And to the generous Youth he warmly cries :  
 " Ingenuous FALKLAND ! by thy frankness won, 445  
 " My willing heart would own thee as my Son ;  
 " But on thy hopes SERENA must decide :—  
 " Haste we together from this house of Pride."  
 So spoke the Sire ; for, to her Votary kind,  
 SOPHROSYLE inspir'd his soften'd mind. 450  
 Speaking, he smil'd, to see that on his word  
 The Lover hung, and blest the sounds he heard ;  
 That his embarrass'd Child his sentence caught  
 With each tumultuous sign of tender thought ;

Whose blushes, springing from the heart, declare 455  
The dawn of fondness in the modest Fair.

Th' enchanted Youth with ecstasy convey'd  
Forth from the troubled Feast the trembling Maid.

As the keen Sailor, whom his daring soul  
Has drawn, too vent'rous, near the freezing pole ; 460

Who, having slighted Caution's tame advice,  
Seems wedg'd within impervious worlds of ice ;

If, from each chilling form of peril free,

At length he reach the unincumber'd sea,

With joy superior to his transient pain, 465

Rushes, exulting, o'er th' expansive main :

Such strong delight SERENA's bosom shar'd,

When sweet Reflection to her heart declar'd,

That all the trials of her Fate were past,

And Love's decisive plaudit seal'd the last. 470

Her airy Guard prepares the softest down,

From Peace's wing, to line the nuptial crown :

Her smiles accelerate the bridal morn,

And clear her Votary's path from every thorn.

On the quick match the Prude's keen censures fall, 475

Blind to the heavenly Power who guided all ;

But mild SERENA scorn'd the prudish play,  
 To wound warm Love with frivolous delay ;  
 Nature's chaste child, not Affectation's slave,  
 The heart she meant to give, she frankly gave. 480  
 Thro' her glad Sire no gouty humours run,  
 Jocund he glories in his destin'd Son.  
 PENELOPE herself, no longer seen  
 In the sour semblance of tormenting Spleen,  
 Buys for her Niece the robes of nuptial state, 485  
 Nor scolds the Mercer once thro' all the long debate.  
 For quick dispatch, the honest Man of law,  
 Toils half the night the legal ties to draw ;  
 At length th' enraptur'd Youth, all forms compleat,  
 Bears his sweet Bride to his paternal seat ; 490  
 On a fair lawn the chearful mansion stood,  
 And high behind it rose a circling wood.  
 As the blest Lord of this extensive reign  
 Led his dear partner thro' her new domain,  
 With fond surprize, SERENA soon descried 495  
 A temple rais'd to her ætherial Guide.  
 Its ornaments she view'd with tender awe,  
 Their fashion such as she in vision saw ;

For



For the kind Youth, her grateful smile to gain,  
Had, from her clear description, deck'd the fane. 500  
Joyful he cried, to his angelic Wife,

“ Be this kind Power the worship of our life !”

He spoke ; and led her to the inmost shrine ;

Here, link'd in rosy bands, two Votaries shine ;

The pencil had imparted life to each, 505

With energy that seem'd beyond its reach.

First stood Connubial Love, a manly Youth,

Whose bright eye spoke the ardent vows of truth ;

Friendship, sweet smiling, fill'd the second place,

In all the softer charms of Virgin grace. 510

Their meeting arms a mystic tablet raise,

Deck'd with these lines, the Moral of my Lays :—

“ VIRTUE's an ingot of Peruvian gold,

“ SENSE the bright ore, Potosi's mines unfold ;

“ But TEMPER's image must their use create, 515

“ And give these precious metals sterling weight.”

